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THE  
FRONTIER

A MAGAZINE OF THE NORTHWEST



NOVEMBER

High Tension, a story by Harry Huse.

A Forest Fire Explosion on the Half Moon Burn, 1929, by  
Harry T. Gisborne.

The Six-Horse Limited Mail, poem, by Ethel Romig Fuller.  
Drawing by Will James.

The Nez Perce War—Battle of the Big Hole—Letters to Governor  
B. F. Potts, 1877, now for the first time printed.

Historic and Romantic Map of Montana.

Other Stories by Roland English Hartley, Harry Hartwick, Grace Stone Coates,  
Queene B. Lister.

Other Essays and Articles by Albert Richard Wetjen, James Stevens, John Upton  
Terrell, Cora E. Van Deusen, W. S. Lewis, V. L. O. Chittick.

Other Poems by Homer Parsons, Sallie Maclay, John Frohlicher, J. Corson Miller,  
Edna Gearhart, Verne Bright, H. Raynesford Mulder, Ruth Clay Price, Lucy  
M. C. Robinson, G. Edward Pendray, James Marshall, Mary Brennan Clapp,  
Jason Bolles.

VOLUME X

NUMBER 1

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# THE FRONTIER

Reg. U. S. Pat. Off.

Volume Ten

NOVEMBER, 1929

Number One

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*Manuscripts should be sent to the Editor; business communications to Blanche Coppo or Keith Heilbronner, Business Managers; subscriptions to Walter Taylor, Circulation Manager—all at the State University of Montana, Missoula.*

*Contributions are welcome at any time of the year. Verse, sketch, essay, article, drama, story, written with sincerity and interest, are acceptable.*

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# ABOARD THE COVERED WAGON

The new cover design is by **Evan Reynolds** (New York City), formerly a student at The State University of Montana, now engaged in art work.

Attention is called to the distinguished board of editors for the Historical Section. **Dr. Hebard** (University of Wyoming) is the author of several books on western history, *Sacajawea, Pilot for Lewis and Clark*, and, with **E. A. Brininstool**, *The Bozeman Trail*, are the most widely read. **Mr. Rollins** (Princeton) wrote *The Cowboy*, explaining his equipment, his work, and his part in western development; he is collecting western documents for Princeton University. **Dr. Phillips** (University of Montana) has edited, with **W. S. Lewis**, *The Journal of John Work*, with **S. Dunbar**, the *Fort Owen Journals, Forty Years on the Frontier*, and many other Northwest documents. **Dr. Hulbert** (Colorado College), Fellow of the Royal Geographic Society of Great Britain, head of the Stewart Commission on Western History, is the author of many books—*Historic Highways of America, The Making of the American Republic, Frontiers* and several others, and the editor of the Crown Collection of American Maps, accurately mapping for the first time the western trails, and of many books. Such a board of editors should assure readers of the worth of the historical documents published in *The Frontier*. **Dr. Phillips** for this issue edits letters never before published which were written to a governor during a most exciting month, that of the Big Hole Battle. The letters are from the files of the Montana Historical Society and are made available thru the courtesy of that Society and of Mr. David Hilger, its librarian.

In this connection attention is called to the Historic and Romantic Map of Montana, constructed by **Eileen W. Barrows** while a student at the State University of Montana, and illustrated by **Irving Shope** (Missoula), an artist in western subjects. Copies, 18x25 inches, will be mailed for one dollar by the circulation manager of *The Frontier*, or for two dollars a map and a year's subscription to *The Frontier*. It makes an interesting gift, especially for an eastern friend.

**Will James**, the widely known and appreciated cowboy artist and writer, author of *Smoky, Sand* and other books, has admirably illustrated the action and spirit of **Ethel Romig Fuller's** poem. Mrs. Fuller (Portland) is the author of *White Peaks and Green*.

**Homer Parsons** (San Bernardino), **Edna Gearhart** (Pasadena), **Ruth Price** (Pasa-

dena), **Roland English Hartley** (San Francisco) are well known California writers. Mr. Parsons has won several contests in the wit's section of *The Saturday Review of Literature*. This is the third story by Mr. Hartley published in *The Frontier*; two others will appear in the January and March issues.

Engaged in newspaper work are **John C. Frohlicher** (Missoulian), **James Marshall** (Seattle Star), both known to *Frontier* readers, **Lucy M. C. Robinson** (Spokane Chronicle) and **G. Edward Pendray** (N. Y. Herald-Tribune), both new to our readers.

**Harry T. Gisborne** is in the Fire Research branch of Silviculture in the U. S. Forest Service, located at Missoula.

Eastern writers are **J. Corson Miller** (Buffalo), author of several volumes of poetry, **H. Raynesford Mulder** (Cleveland), formerly of St. Helens, Oregon, and **Harry G. Huse** (West Redding, Conn.), whose story *Pioneer* appears in *The World's Best Short Stories for 1929*. Mr. Huse has spent some winters in Fort Benton, Montana.

Middle Western writers are **John Upton Terrell** (Chicago), **Sallie Sinclair MacLay** (Indianapolis), formerly of Lolo, Montana, and **Harry Hartwick** (Iowa City), who helps the editors of *The Midland*.

Pacific Coast writers are **Verne Bright** (Beaverton, Ore.), whose poetry has the sea-coast in it, **Albert Richard Wetjen** (Oswego, Ore.), author of *Way for a Sailor*, and contributor to *The Saturday Evening Post* and other magazines, **James Stevens** (Seattle), mouthpiece for Paul Bunyan, author of *Homer in the Sagebrush* and other books, contributor to *The American Mercury*, and **Queene B. Lister** (Portland), author of widely quoted poems.

**Grace Stone Coates** (Martinsdale, Mont.) is an associate editor of *The Frontier*. **Mary Brennan Clapp** and **Cora Van Deusen** live in Missoula; **H. J. Bolles** lives in Butte, formerly Chimney Rock, Mont. **W. S. Lewis**, attorney for several Indian tribes, and organizer of the first Indian congress, is known also as an editor of western historical documents. **V. L. O. Chittick** is a professor in Reed College, Portland.

The Editor is making an anthology of Northwest verse. Poets desirous of representation who live in Montana, Idaho, Washington, or Oregon are asked to send to him at once copies of not more than six of their best poems for his consideration.





## ORIGINATIONS

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WILL JAMES  
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# THE FRONTIER

A MAGAZINE OF THE NORTHWEST

*"The frontiers are not east or west, north or south, but wherever a man fronts a fact."*  
—THOREAU.

## THE SIX-HORSE LIMITED MAIL

BY ETHEL ROMIG FULLER

We always ran out when we heard it come—  
The chuck-a-luck of the coach and the thrum  
Of hooves—barnboys, drummers, chambermaid—  
For it was a sight as it swooped down the grade  
At the end of the old Calapooia trail:  
The yellow-wheeled stage of the Limited Mail,  
Harness and buckles and doubletrees spun  
Of silver and jet in the setting sun;  
The three pairs of horses as galloping-white  
As foam on a mountain torrent at night.  
We could soon see the driver—he was belted to place  
On the high rocking seat of the thoroughbrace—  
Rising to give them the silk; heard him shout  
As the length of his thirty-foot lash cracked out  
Over withers and haunches! How the pebbles sprayed  
From the pounding feet at the fusilade!  
As if they were shod, not with iron, but with wings,  
The leads skimmed the road, the lather-flecked swings  
Pressing them close, and riding *their* hocks  
The lumbering wheels striking fire from the rocks.  
And always we cheered when they whirled through the gate  
To the steps of the station with never a wait  
Nor lessening of speed—the sudden stop peeling  
Half moons in the sod, the brakeshoe squealing,  
Barnboys already unhooking the traces  
Before the passengers stepped from their places,  
While the guard leapt off the boot with his gun  
Packing the mailsacks and "dust" on the run,  
The driver lighting a big black cigar,  
Mustaches a-twirl, strode in to the bar  
And the keeper with many a jovial sally  
Boomed out a welcome to Umpqua valley.  
Then the station door slammed to on the din—  
The Six-Horse Limited Mail was in!

## OTHER GODS, MONTANA!

BY HOMER M. PARSONS

Never did Olympians dwell  
 In your woods of spruce and fir;  
 Moloch yawn, or great Thor hurl  
     His thunder;  
 Never did the sirens call,  
     Never did the harpies sway  
 In your boughs, or banshees wail  
     Thereunder.

*No, but with the melting snow, Bunyan has appeared,  
 Breaking off a pine tree to brush his shaggy beard!*

Bitter Root and Yellowstone  
     Never saw a bassarid;  
 Never dreamed of glades wherein  
     The fairies  
 Danced and capered on the green;  
     Never once the goat-foot god  
 Blew his merry pipes upon  
     Your prairies.

*No, but when the soft chinook April's green unlocks,  
 Here comes Bunyan with his big blue ox!*

## PETALS

BY SALLIE SINCLAIR MACLAY

Petals of old dead years  
 Will drift and cover  
 The things that now I love—  
 Warm hands,  
 Eyes full of dreaming,  
 Small whispered secrets,  
 Voices that thrill and sing—  
 All these shall be forgotten.  
 But oh, let my heart always cling  
 To fragments of spent blossoms  
 Drifting, drifting,  
 In purple shadowed orchards.



## HIGH TENSION

BY HARRY G. HUSE

“NOW that this feller Taber has gone back East there to Ohio and has had a chanet to study the thing over I guess he’ll begin to see the joke too.

“Maybe after while he’ll understand me laughing, and’ll set down and drop me a post card. A pitcher post card showing the grounds of that Normal School, and saying he found the Missus and younguns doing first rate and glad to see him.

“But maybe he won’t neither. You can’t never tell about them dry-landers. They wasn’t well-balanced, I never thought, take them as a general class. Didn’t hardly none of them have what you would really call a sense of humor. Take ‘Limpy’ Adams for instance. Laid into his wife and kids with an axe and then blowed off the top of his own head with a shotgun. All that ruction ’cause he couldn’t raise wheat on land where the government had figured he ought to. Or that old maid dressmaker, Miss Lucas, from Indiana. The one they still got up there to Warm Springs. Laying out on the rim-rock in Bird Coulee all one afternoon—hoping for a rattlesnake to bite her! All tired out, she claimed, ’cause the wind wouldn’t never stop blowing!

“Or you take Taber hisself, for that matter. I guess he was the worst of the lot. Like when I used to see him, evening after evening, standing over there on his place with his hat off and his head up in the air, talking to them poles as if they was human beings or God Almighty or something.

“A funny flock, the whole kit and

boodle, and the country, I say, is well shut of the most of them.

“I told Old Dave Hilger, in to the Stockmen’s National, how it would be, when they first started coming. ‘Listen here,’ says I, ‘They’ll ruin the country and won’t do theirselves no good neither!’ That’s what I told him clean back there at the beginning.

“Old Dave just leaned back in his old cowhide chair and give me the haw-haw.

“‘Ed,’ says he, ‘you’re a damn old back number. You been living out on that ranch of yours for the last twenty-five years—you and that Injun woman—just raising sheep and letting progress pass you by. Wake up, Ed!’ says he, ‘Something to this dry-farming!’

“‘Dave,’ says I, ‘this railroad and government and land agent hot air’s got you going. Sure they can dry-farm some parts of Montana, but not here! They’re slopping over when they think they can farm here. Thirty Mile Bench is the same as it’s always been, and that’s sub-semi-arid. It’s going to stay that way regardless of these big-mouthed claim locators and highfaluting experiment stations. Maybe they can dust-mulch and summer-fallow,’ I says, ‘and raise a measly crop of wheat some places. But not out on old Thirty Mile! The Lord made that bench to grow grass for sheep, and that’s all it’s fit for!’

“‘Hell, Ed,’ he come back at me, ‘you’re sore, that’s what ails you. These new pioneers of ours are taking your range, and there won’t be any more free grass for your woolies. You



better bring in some poor relatives and a lot of dumb herders and grab a homestead for each of them. Climb on the band wagon,' he says, 'The pastoral days are over. From now on it's wheat!'

"'Maybe I am sore,' says I, 'but not sore enough to try to raise wheat on one good rain, a couple of blizzards, and three dew-falls a year. You never yet see people tackle a new proposition without slopping over. Half the homesteads that'll be took ain't fit for farming. Let them keep away from Thirty Mile Bench and stick to the sections that gits fourteen inches rain-fall a year. Far as my sheep are concerned,' I says, 'I've leased the Reserve for three years. I'll give these new pioneers of yours that long to git their bellies full. I'll stay on my own band-wagon, and watch this other one wabble along and break down!'

"And I was right, except that it's taken five years stead of three. The trouble with these scizzorbills was they didn't know when they was licked.

"Like this feller Taber.

"He was a good sample of old Dave's new class of pioneers. We got all kinds and mostly queer ones. They put me in mind of converts at a good rousing 'Come to Jesus' meeting. They'd been a lot of strong preaching and hal-lujahs in all the magazines and newspapers. 'Three hundred and twenty acres free,' and 'Strike your roots in the soil,' and 'Build your Little Gray Home in the West.' That kind of stuff.

"It stirred up all the unsuccessful and dissatisfied folks in the country. You can guess what kind of sinners come to the Mourners' Bench and waled in the straw.

"There was sharp-faced women stenographers from Illinois, coming out in pairs maybe, and filing side by side, with their shacks just across the line, so's they could stick their heads out their windows and call good morning. That is before they got to heaving stove lids at each other. And dirt farmers, with manure on their shoes, and round, fat wives and a half-dozen children, trying to make themselves believe this was going to be another Nebrasky or Kansas. And grocery storekeepers with notches wore in their fingers from breaking off the string after they'd wrapped up a quarter's worth of sugar and asked what else today.

"And then there was this feller Taber.

"I'd guess him at about thirty-two when he first come here. Nothing special about him you'd pay much attention to. Just a common looking feller, quiet-like, with glasses and soft hands and a partly bald forehead. After he'd been here a while he got kind of stooped, 'cept when he'd think about it and straighten up. He got into a habit of setting his jaw and throwing his head back, like he was one of my old bucks and his skimpy forelock was a pair of horns. He got to doing that more and more as things went along. I blamed it on his looking up so much at them poles.

"He'd been a teacher in a Normal School back East, and he was engaged to be married when he come out here. That was why he come. She was only about twenty. One of his pupils back at the school.

"It's hard to explain what'd happened to him. Looking at it one way it don't hardly seem to make sense.

He'd been one of these kind of timid young fellers that gits along better in school than any place else. Hadn't never played much with other fellers or had nothing to do with girls. Didn't have much stomach for things that was give and take and rough and tumble.

"He'd just kind of drifted into teaching at the same school where he'd studied, and'd never stopped to size hisself up until he met her. She'd sat in his classes for some time before he'd noticed her. Then something come over him all to once, and from then on he couldn't keep his eyes off her. First thing he knew she was staying after class to talk to him, and after while he was walking with her evenings in the moonlight, under the big old trees. She was a pretty little thing with light hair and round blue eyes and a pink complexion, when she first come here.

"He told me a lot about her and him, there in the beginning, before she come, when he was living by hisself and was hard up for someone to talk to.

"When he found out, he says, that she had give him her love, a great wakin'-up come over him, 'most like he'd felt for the first time what it took to be a man. I wasn't listening very close the night he opened up and told me the most about it. That kind of talk always did make me tired. Telling me about the first time she kissed him! There's a lot I don't remember. But you could tell she'd set him loonier than a sheepherder. He said something about finding he had unworthy offerings to lay at her altar. He meant he was ashamed of so far having made his life work training a bunch of young girls how to be school teachers. The

miracle, he says, was that being so little of a man she had come to love him. Now that he'd woke up and had her by his side nothing could stop him. I could have told him something about having a woman on your hands if I'd of been a mind to.

"He'd give up his job and come out in June, soon as school was over. I guess there in the beginning she thought it was real romantic too. She was to follow and join him when he got his place picked out and his shack built.

"He must of got a shock when he first got off the train and seen the country. None of the homesteaders had really understood what was meant by boundless prairies. Nary a tree for forty miles in any direction. The only thing that sticks up out of the benchland higher'n a sheep's back is old Chimney Butte, and it's plumb barren.

"I guess he wished he'd stayed back home school teaching. But maybe not. The town was full of other folks like him that hadn't never seen a thousand acres all together in one piece, let alone a hundred thousand. They was all spouting about the new agricultural era and this foxy principle of summer fallow. The notion seemed to have got out that all a person had to do out here to be a rancher was live a wild, free life and ride around on horseback.

"Things was pretty well picked over time he got here. But that didn't stop the land agents. They was still able to show him plenty of places. Some of them was only six, seven miles from town. But he come clean over here and took this piece that joins me.

"I wasn't able to figger out why until he told me. The old 'lectric

transmission line from the Falls come along his south boundary, and swung off across the corner of my place to the foothills. He thought things would be less lonesome account of it running along his boundary.

"It wasn't so much the poles because God knows they're lonelier looking than nothing would be. They're set in threes, fastened together at the top with a long cross-arm, and the wires hanging off big crockery insulators at the end and drooping along to the next set of poles. Whenever I look at them they put me in mind of a gallows. But maybe I got myself kind of soured on them worrying the wire might break and drop down into a bunch of my sheep.

"It wasn't the poles so much, Taber says, but the thing they stood for. 'High tension!' he says to me, 'Twenty-five thousand volts up there in those slender wires! Energy—power—and life!' says he. It always made me kind of tired when he'd talk like that. 'Lonesome poles,' I 'member he said, 'standing there year after year on a lonesome prairie! Standing through wind and rain and snow with their arms 'round each other's shoulders to help carry the load! Like a man,' says he, most like he was talking to himself, 'and his woman, and later his children—living here on these bleak acres—raising wheat to feed the world!'

"If I'd of knowed him better then I'd of come right out and told him that a woman that wasn't used to this country was more likely to be like one of the drooping wires.

"It was while he was building his house and digging his well and putting up fence and waiting for her to come,

I guess, that he got into the habit of what you might call hobnobbing with them poles. He was gitting some idea, I guess, of what him and her was going to be up against. It probably was lonesome when a man wasn't used to it. Sometimes after the wind's been blowing a couple of weeks even a sheepherder will git kind of mooney. And then after having somebody to tell him what to do all his life it must of scared Taber a little to find he was his own boss.

"Anyway he got to talking to them poles.

"I was coming by one night 'bout sundown, and stopped in to visit with him. He'd been painting his house, and was standing by the corner with the brush in his hand, looking off to the west. There was spots all over his clothes and his shoes, and a big smear of paint almost covering his chin.

" 'Millen,' he says to me, motioning off over the prairie, 'just look at that!'

"I looked but all I could see was the sun going down and that line of poles.

" 'You've been living here too long,' he says, 'You've lost the feel of this country and the beauty of it.

" 'Just look at it!' he says, 'The prairie deep purple, and the sky dull, flaming red, and striding straight at us,' he says, as if he was telling it to someone that had weak eyes and couldn't see, 'striding straight at us the triple poles of the transmission line. Gaunt siloettes,' or something like that he called them, 'against a glowing sky!'

" 'It's lonesome,' he goes on like he was talking to himself, 'God! But it's lonesome! But it's fine too!' he says, 'She'll understand!'



"'If I was you,' I says, 'I'd of built my house a little further to one side. If one of them wires was to break in a sleet storm or blow down in a hard wind there'd be trouble.'

"Well, she come out in the fall, and he met her in town and they was married. And then he brought her out to the place that he'd got ready. He'd fixed it up right tidy, with the house and stable painted, and a dinky little picket fence with a swinging gate.

"He'd gone and give it a name. He got that idea, I guess from some of the other fool dry-landers. There was a feller on the way in to town that'd set out a couple dozen sick looking cottonwoods 'round his house and called the place 'Prairie Grove.' And another'd put up a big, hopeful sign on his barn, 'Golden Acres.' Taber'd kept right up with the procession. He'd stuck three two-by-fours in the ground, like the posts of the transmission line, with a board nailed flat ag'in them at the top like it was the cross arm, and on it he had printed in big black letters the words 'High Tension.' I wanted to ask him why he didn't put on the rest—'Danger! Keep Away! 25,000 Volts!'

"Now that Taber'd got his wife and his house and his stable and his sign up by the gate, he set to breaking. There was funny sights out on the bench them days. Lady school teachers wearing overalls and digging post holes. Dry-goods clerks in yeller khaki pants trying to milk these wild-eyed range cows. And Missouri farmers with long whiskers snapping in the wind.

"But the best of all was Taber plowing. The sod was tough and a little rocky. The breaking plow bucked like

a half-broke broncho. Taber'd bought hisself four mismatched horses. He'd got one mare that wanted to trot all the time, and a roan gelding whose natural gait was a mile a hour. What with hanging onto the whip and the lines and the handles of the plow and trying to keep his feet on the ground, he'd git hisself into a heavy perspiration.

"He'd scarce be able to drag one foot past the other when he come up from the stable at night after doing the milking. But he'd stand there by the house for a minute and straighten out all his troubles by looking at the transmission line. He didn't git much help that way from his wife whose first name, I forgot to say, was Bessie. Bessie was running into her own troubles inside the house what with alkali water and no conveniences like she'd been used to and nobody 'round all day to talk to. She didn't seem able to pick up courage from looking at the poles her own self, so he had to git enough for the both of them.

"I guess she minded the inconveniences and the lonesomeness more'n ever before they got through that first winter. It was a stinger. Snow there for a while 'most up to the tops of the windows.

"Her and him had a good chanet to git real well acquainted them long days inside the house. He hadn't nothing to do but the chores out to the barn. He'd dug a path to go along from the back door out to the hen-house and the stable. He'd stop sometimes when it was twenty below zero and a strong wind blowing, and stand there, gawking off along them singing wires. When he got so cold he couldn't stand it he'd go back inside the house.



"While we was near neighbors I never really did git acquainted with Bessie. My own woman is a full-blood Blackfoot, and now that she's got old and heavy she ain't sociable. So we didn't visit them and they never come to see us. But I'd see Mrs. Taber sometimes at the kitchen door, throwing out dishwater or out in the yard hanging out clothes, and to look at her, kind of bewildered and droopy, it didn't seem like she belonged in this country.

"Well, starting early spring everybody went back to breaking. It made me mad to see them turning under all that good grass. They sure spoiled the looks of the country.

"Taber'd got a little handier at his plowing, and didn't wear hisself out so. He needed his strength for cheering up Bessie after he got in from the field nights. She was fixing to celebrate their anniversary by having a baby. I guess it didn't make her any handier with the housework or more cheerful 'bout dry-land life. I'd have to kind of grin every time I'd think about that sign of Taber's. I wondered if maybe they wouldn't call the youngun '25,000 Volts.'

"Well, things traveled along 'bout the way I'd figgered. Only not quite so fast. This dry-farming here turned out to be a pretty come-on game for suckers. It was the summer-fallow that done it. Half your land's in wheat while the other half's idle. Two years' moisture, they figgered, would raise one year's crop. After a man's grain burned out and good sense told him to quit he'd keep right on plugging. He'd spent so much time cultivating next year's ground he hated to give up. The weather took a hand at fooling folks

'cause we had more rain than usual the third year. Things grew pretty well, and it set everyone crazy. 'Bout that time Bessie had another baby.

"Next year the wheat got just about high enough to make good pasture when the dry weather hit it. A lot of folks starved out and quit the following winter. Bessie wanted to go and Taber had a hard time staying. Her folks'd started writing her letters 'bout coming back. She'd read the letters to him. After that he'd have to stand out there in the yard a long time feeding hisself the full strength of the current.

"By spring half the homesteads was empty and it looked like there was going to be a future for sheep. But the tougher ones like Taber still hung on. Things started out fine for them. We had a wet spring for this country and the wheat was green and growing. Taber had a grin from ear to ear. He'd got to be a reg'lar farmer now. His hands was all tough and hard and horny. He was a devil at working.

"But that wet spring was just Thirty Mile's way of fooling the suckers. Pretty soon the wind commenced to blow. Once it started it kept at it steady. My old woman put a wash out on the line one morning and the first clothes she took out of the basket was dry time she got the last ones hung out. By June the wheat had all curled up and died. Folks picked up then and got out in earnest.

"Things must of got pretty rasping then over to the Tabers' 'cause she up one day and left him. She'd got a letter from home with a check in it and she just packed up her things and took the kids and went on back to her folks in Ohio.

"He told me something 'bout it a couple nights later when I dropped over to visit with him. He'd been weed-skinning all day on that cussed summer-fallow. I come on him sitting in his little kitchen in the half-dark, looking out through the window. He'd et his supper and the dishes was still on the table along with some more left over from breakfast and dinner. When I hollered and he turned and saw me he got up and come outside.

" 'Well,' he says, trying to act cheerful, 'I'm a bachelor for a while. Bessie and the children have gone home for a visit.'

" 'Hmmm,' I says.

" 'Gone back,' he says, 'to see her folks. I guess it's been pretty lonesome out here for her.'

" 'They coming back soon?' I asks him.

" 'I guess not,' he says.

" 'You aiming to stay a spell longer your own self?' I asks him.

" 'I got to stay,' he says, 'I've got a sign!'

" 'A sign?' says I, 'You mean the one out there by the gate?'

" 'No,' he says, 'You don't understand. A real sign. A symbol!'

"Then he goes on to tell me what he means.

"Seems like the night Bessie got her letter telling her to come home he was all upset about it and didn't know what to do. There was a chanet, her folks said, for him to git back his old job. He wanted to go and yet he didn't. He figgered there was still a future for the country. I could of told him that there was but it was sheep.

"Somehow it seemed to him, he says, like she hadn't cared for him as much

as she was able. Anyway not like he had thought she was going to there at first. Things hadn't worked out right between them. He'd got it into his head that it was because he was a failure. 'I couldn't go back with her,' I 'member he says, 'defeated. And I couldn't bear to have her go back alone.'

" 'You see,' he says after while, 'I'm still in love with Bessie.'

" 'Yeah?', says I, and I 'member thinking to myself there was worse things than being hitched to a Black-foot that got fat and satisfied to sit in a corner, grunting.

" 'Yes,' says he.

"Well, she'd been dead set on going, and he had to make up his mind. She went to bed crying, and he come out in the yard.

" 'You know,' he says to me, 'how some evenings the color stays for a long time in the west. Well, it was that way this night,' he says, 'There was still light along the horizon. I wanted to go worse'n I wanted to stay. I stood there wrestling with myself,' he says, 'looking at those three poles that stand over by the fence corner. They were black against that band of light. And as I looked what do you think, all of a sudden, they became?'

" 'When I squint at them,' I says, 'all I can see is a gallows.'

" 'No, no!' he says, 'Not a gallows! Three crosses, Millen! Three crosses! Calvary!'

"So that's why he'd stayed while Bessie'd gone on back home.

"Well, now she was gone, Taber kept right on tending his summer-fallow. We had a lot of wind that summer. I'd look over there to his place sometimes,

and wouldn't hardly be able to see him for the dust blowing.

"When planting time come in the fall he put in another crop of winter wheat. He spent all the money he had left for seed. It looked like maybe he would starve to death over the winter. He'd already got pretty well gaunted-up from eating his own cooking. There wasn't any work he could do on his own place during the cold weather. So when one of my men left I offered Taber a job winter-herding.

"He turned his horses out and come over here and lived in the bunkhouse with the other herders. He had his living and I paid him thirty-five dollars a month beside. He might just as well stayed on during the spring and let his wheat grow. But soon's the frost was out of the ground he quit and went back to gitting ready next year's summer-fallow.

"Then one day I see a little piece in the Falls' paper that made me chuckle. It was such a good one it seemed like I'd ought to show it to Taber. He didn't take no paper now and wasn't likely to see it. It was too good a joke to keep to myself. But somehow I didn't git around to tell him. I guess I didn't exactly know how he'd take it.

"Well, we had rain, and Taber's wheat started growing. It come along nice through May and June until it was almost in the milk. Dry weather set in in July, but only partly hurt it. There was enough sap left in the stalks to make it fill. Some of the kernels was small and shrivelled, but there'd be a crop all right.

"Taber quit weed-skinning, and started patching up an old binder. He

went in town and brought hisself out a load of twine.

"'Bout that time he got a jolt from Bessie. Maybe her folks had put her up to it. She throwed things square up to him. She still cared for him, she said, but couldn't much longer with him so far away. He'd have to do something or she had a right to be free.

"When he told me 'bout it he was laughing. 'Look, Millen!' he says, reaching over the fence, and pulling off a half-dozen heads of grain. He rubs them in his hands and blows away the chaff. 'Look!' says he, holding out that little handful of wrinkled kernels, 'Wheat!' says he, 'Stored-up energy! Power! Life!'

"'Sure,' I says, 'and how about your missus?'

"'This solves things,' he says. 'Don't you see? This is success. After I've harvested my crop I'll go back there and spend the winter. We'll come back in the Spring, and start new again!'

"But Thirty Mile had a trick up her sleeve he hadn't seen yet.

"Taber got his binder tinkered up and started cutting. The wheat was dead ripe now, and he couldn't stop to shock it. He just let the bundles lay.

"He'd been cutting three, four days, and was about a third finished. Then late one hot afternoon there come up a bunch of clouds. They kept gitting thicker and thicker in the west until they was a nasty purple. Then they got all curly on top, and down underneath they turned kind of pasty white.

"I watched them from my yard until I knowed what was coming. Then I struck out for Taber who was driving



down the side of the field toward the house. I didn't go far before he heard me yelling. He got his horses unhooked from the binder all right and just about to the barn when the hail struck him. He was battered up a little before he got to shelter with the horses, and I got peppered good and proper running back to my house.

"Well, those clouds just opened up and let us have it. There was a lot of wind back of that hail. I thought it would pound the shingles right off the roof.

"The storm only lasted 'bout ten minutes. But when it quit the stones was laying a couple of inches deep all over the ground, and things was scattered 'round every which way from the wind.

"I went out in my yard and poked 'round there, cold and shivery. I see Taber come out of his barn, and walk over to his wheat. The standing grain was beat down like a couple thousand sheep had tromped it. The bundles too was all tore up and pounded flat in the mud.

"I was busy setting things to rights 'round my place until evening. Then I thought I'd mosey over and see how Taber was gitting along. I'd seen him walking back and forth across his field with his head down for 'bout an hour. Then he'd quit and gone into the house.

"When I come along to his place I see where the wind had played some devilment there too. The dinky little picket fence was tore up and laying flat on the ground. The gate was tore off its hinges, and up-ended with the points sticking in the mud. All that was left of his sign, far as I could see, was one of the two-by-four uprights.

"It was just about dark then, and there was still a chilly wind blowing. There was a ragged strip of black cloud laying a couple hands high off the prairie in the west. Below that was some sick-looking light where the sun'd gone down.

"I come quiet 'round the corner of the house, and then I see Taber. He was standing underneath the wires with his back half turned. He was twisting something 'round his left wrist.

"He stoops down and picks up something from the ground. He kind of braced hisself. Then he threw back his head with that funny way he had. Before I knew what he was up to he pulled back his right arm and let fly. I see a rock go flying up into the air, dragging a long tail of wire behind it. It arched up over that transmission line, and fell 'bout halfway back to the ground. It brought up short, dangling there. I see Taber's left arm jerk up over his head.

"He just stood there 'thout moving. Then, slow-like, he put his other hand up to his head. I made some noise, and he seen me. He just stood there.

"I says 'Good Evening,' and moves over toward him. He just stood there with his arm still up over his head. He'd had to use barb wire, and where it went round his wrist it'd tore through the hide and cut him. Some blood was running down his wrist.

"I reached up to git the wire unfastened.

"'Look out!' he says, 'Don't touch it!'

"'Hmmm,' I says, 'You ain't kept up with the news. This line's dead since they put through the new one. I



see it in the Falls' paper. There ain't been no current 'long here since back in May. They'll be 'long here 'most any day now, taking down the poles.'

"I untwisted the wire from his wrist, and the rock dropped to the ground.

"Well, we just stood there, looking at each other. It kind of made me fidget.

"Then I looked down, and had to laugh right out loud. 'Haw-haw,' says I, 'Haw-haw! That's a good one, Taber!'

"He looked at me sharp, then down where I was pointing. It was that sign of his with the letters all smeared up with mud.

" 'There it is, Taber,' I says, still laughing, 'There it is.'

"He read the words out loud, slow-like—'High Tension.' Then he laughed too but awful hollow and funny.

" 'Yes, there it is!' he says, and turns and walks away.

"Well, Taber pulled out next day for Ohio, and left me here raising sheep. The grass ain't been so much hurt as you might think by all the breaking. It'll come back time the fences blow down.

"And maybe after Taber's been back there a while longer and's had a chanet to think things over he'll see the joke and drop a line to his old neighbor.

"Anyways I just had to laugh right out."

## MINERS

By JOHN C. FROHLICHER

### I. ALONE IN A STOPE

It's worse than death, that hush,  
And the black beyond my lamplight,  
I can hear the hanging pushing—  
Forcing at the mine-props—  
Even that is silent—sure  
As ever-ready death. And when I work  
There is no echo of my shovel's scrape—  
Nothing but the dry-bone sound  
Of ghastly grey-green ore  
Rattling in the chute.

### II. GHOSTS

Hear them knocking—listen—there!  
Ghosts of miners—fighting for air.  
Faint—far away—down the stope—  
Picking the cave in—and no hope.  
You hear them knocking in the Elm Orlu,  
In the Leadville mines, and at Granite, too—  
In the Coeur d'Alenes, and the Comstock lodes,  
And in soft coal mines, where gas explodes—  
Hear them! Listen—quiet—there!  
Ghosts of miners—wanting air.

## A FOREST FIRE EXPLOSION

By H. T. GISBORNE

NEWSPAPER accounts of large forest fires in the northern Rocky Mountain region frequently refer to "runs," "blow-ups," and occasionally to "explosions" of the fire. Many Federal, State, and private timber protective organization officers, and some unfortunate homesteaders, have seen these fires "blow-up" and "explode," but either because the incident was attended by so much grief and worry, or because the spectacular features were obscured by the necessity of being somewhere else, few of these men have attempted to describe the event.

When Montana's largest man-caused fire, the 90,000 acre Half-Moon conflagration, ran this summer from Teakettle Mountain to Belton and Glacier Park Headquarters in one afternoon it left a trail of desolation which will ruin that twelve-mile auto drive for thousands of autoists for many, many years. No visitor to Glacier Park can escape that blot on one of Montana's beauty spots. Homesteads, ranches, and small sawmills were reduced, not to heaps of ashes, but to mere traces of light and dark ashes, small patches of fused china and glassware, twisted metal bedsteads, bent drive shafts, and cracked engines and saws. Several families lost all that they had struggled throughout life to acquire. The region lost the soft green forest that made it beautiful, and that supplied the materials and the chance for labor which made life possible.

At the Dessert Mountain forest-fire lookout station, four miles south of Belton and 3,000 feet above it, the man on duty made fast time down the nine-mile trail to Coram Ranger Station when the

head of this fire came roaring toward his mountain. But the natural wind channel, formed by the gorge of the Middle Fork of the Flathead river, drew the center of devastation past him temporarily. Two days later, on August 23, 1929, we went back to the top of Dessert to obtain measurements of atmospheric temperature, humidity, and wind, and to note for comparison the behavior of the fire in different timber types on different slopes and exposures according to the prevailing weather. Forest protective organizations ought to know at all times for all parts of their properties what fire behavior to expect according to their current weather measurements. With such knowledge it should be possible to give the utmost protection when the danger is greatest, and to spend the least money when the danger is least.

We arrived at the lookout station about noon and after making a first series of weather measurements I went north the half mile along the ridge top to Belton Point, a secondary observation station. From this point the north face of the mountain drops two thousand feet in one mile, the contours running east and west, to the gently rolling and flat topography meandered four miles away by the Middle fork of the Flathead river.

At that time the southern flank of the fire was still over a mile from the base of the steep north end of the mountain. Perhaps six miles of front were visible, the rest hidden by soft swirls of big columns of smoke. I knew no attack was being made along this line at that time, all available men and equip-

ment being concentrated around the town of Belton and around Park headquarters, with fire on all sides of them, trying first to save these most valuable properties. Altho the front below me was beginning to boil actively in the green timber, as a result of the rising temperature and wind and decreasing afternoon humidity, it was not yet crowning extensively. And with the light wind coming from the southwest, diagonally opposing the advance toward the south, I thought it was safe to go down to the spring, some 800 feet in elevation and thirteen switchbacks by trail, below Belton Point and on its eastern slope.

The trip to the spring and back to the lookout station, with a five gallon backpack, was completed just in time for the four o'clock weather measurements. It seemed preferable, however, to make these on Belton Point, closer to the fire and where the front, which was now very active, could be seen more extensively than from the main station. This was a sad decision, because it resulted in no measurements whatever.

The lookout, Mr. Tunnell, who had been cleaning up the cabin while I went for water, decided to go with me to Belton Point. As we walked toward it smoke was boiling up from the north end of the mountain in a tremendous pillar towering thousands of feet above our 7,400-foot station. Just as when one looks up from the sidewalk at the base of a sky-scraper the top is out of view, so the top of this column of smoke was hidden by its sides even tho we were over half a mile from its base. For some unknown reason the customary roar of such rapidly rising masses of smoke, gas, and flame was not present in this case, nor did I notice it later when the

mile wide whirling "explosion" developed and swept in under us. It was obvious, nevertheless, that the fire front which had been over a mile from the base of the mountain an hour ago was now going to reach Belton point before we could, or at least before we would.

Like all truly massive movements the great pillar of smoke belching from the north face of the mountain seemed to move slowly. Black bodies of unburned gases would push their fungoid heads to the surface of the column, change to the orange of flame as they reached oxygen, and then to the dusty gray of smoke. Huge bulges would grow slowly on the sides of the column obliterating other protuberances and being in turn engulfed. We could see beautifully, as the atmosphere between the fire and us was kept clear by the light southwesterly wind. There seemed to be no danger as the mountain of smoke leaned appreciably with this breeze, and leaned away from us. We went forward about two hundred yards.

Such a spectacle, even as it enlarged one's heart enough to interfere with normal breathing, made us wish for the presence of others to enjoy the thrill. We stopped to take two pictures, one of the soft and apparently slowly boiling smoke column to the north, and one to the northeast out across the two-mile-wide canyon that slashes north and south between Dessert Mountain and the range tipped by Pyramid Peak. Down there lay the valley in the shadow of death, but altho even the poor photograph portrays it, we did not realize what was to happen in the next few minutes.

Drifting across the north and opening end of this canyon dark, dirty, sinister curtains of smoke kept out the clean



## *The Frontier*

sunlight and reduced all objects to a dull gray-brown color. From the north-west shoulder of the mountain across the trough belches of flame would rip thru the smoke surface with a light of a hideous color never used by Maxfield Parrish. The high cirque forming the head of Kootenai Creek on the eastern slope, across the divide from us, was burning out in one brief instant. All the colorful beauty of the Alpine flora surrounding two lovely little lakes nestled high up in the home of the ptarmigan was being turned to deathly ashes. For perhaps half a minute the flames leaped hundreds of feet above the rocky ridge top, followed by billows of dull, funereal smoke as a mountaineer's paradise became a Hell's Half Section.

Even as I snapped these two photographs we noticed that the wind velocity was increasing. One glance at the boiling inferno north of us and we saw the reason. The southwest wind, sweeping gently as it was around the northwest shoulder of Dessert Mountain, was striking the periphery of a rising mass of hot gas and smoke. The result was the beginning of a whirling, clockwise motion, with the deep canyon east of us acting to draw the center of suction into it.

Suddenly, yet it seemed slowly—the movement was so massive, the curtain of smoke across the mouth of the canyon bulged at about our level, perhaps two thousand feet above the creek bottom. The bulge moved south, up the canyon, and as it moved it dipped deeper and deeper until it touched the creek, turned toward the southwest and up the slope toward us, turned west, then northwest, and then north away from us and toward the northern tip of our mountain

and the center of great heat. The map shows that this revolving mass was more than a mile in diameter.

Most of this we saw over our shoulders as we sprinted south along the open ridge-top trail to the lookout cabin. As we dashed in the door to snatch our packsacks with what clothes we had not unpacked from them, we saw a second whirl developing. As we came out the door, hurriedly adjusting our shoulder straps, the new revolution swept majestically up the creek, up the slope under the lookout cabin—but a full quarter of a mile below us, turned west, northwest, and north, and obliterated the spot from which we had taken our pictures.

Then came the finale, the explosion, the display that should terminate any really spectacular show. The suction of this rising mass of heat drew the air across our ridge with a velocity that bounced me up against the lookout house as I stood there gaping. This clean, cold, and therefore heavy air literally tore across the ridge and down the eastern slope to remedy the vacuum and to ignite the waiting torches. Like a mile wide and crystal clear wedge it drove in under the solid whirl of superlatively hot smoke and lifted it fifty or sixty feet, so that we could again see the entire slope from ridge top to creek bottom. As the oxygen in this fresh air reached the trees, brush, windfalls, and grass which had been super-heated by the big whirls everything burst into flame at once. According to the map about two square miles of surface area, over 1,300 acres, were devastated by these two whirls in a period of possibly one or two minutes.

Ordinarily the front of a forest fire advances like troops in skirmish forma-



tion, pushing ahead faster here, slower there, according to the timber type and fuels, but maintaining a practically unbroken front. Even when topography, fuels, and weather result in a crown fire the sheet of flames leaps from one tree crown to the next, changing green forest to black ruins at a relatively slow rate, from one-half to one mile an hour, according to two measured runs on the Sullivan creek fire. "Blow-ups" begin when such "runs" commence to throw spots of fire ahead of the advancing front, the spots burning back to swell the main front and thereby adding appreciably to the momentum of the rising mass of heat. Men have been able to race out to safety from in front of many ordinary runs and crown fires. Some men have escaped and some have been trapped by blow-ups. But when square miles of forest are, in the course of a few seconds, blanketed by a smothering, blistering whirl of heat so great that the temperature of all animal and vegetable material is raised far above the ignition point yet cannot burn for lack of sufficient oxygen, then, when the oxygen comes, a true explosion results.

Two days later, entering the canyon east of Dessert Mountain from its northern end, to blaze a trail in to the now slowly burning front and to select a safe site for a fire camp, I found the body of a young grouse. Sitting erect where it had been actually scared stiff by the terrifying whirl of death sweeping into its canyon home, it was facing toward the direction from which the great heat had come. Undoubtedly too frightened to fly, the little bird's muscles had hardened in paralysis. Even the neck and head were still alertly erect in fear and wonder. The beak, feathers, and feet were seared away. The perfectly balanced body still sits there; one of thousands of such monuments to man's carelessness.

About eight feet farther up the blackened slope a pine squirrel, sometimes called "Ilappy Jack," lay stretched out at full length. The burned off stubs of his two little hands were reaching out as far ahead as possible, the back legs were extended to the full in one final, hopeless push, trying, like any human, to crawl just one painful inch farther to escape this unnecessary death.

## THE MOOSE IN THE MOONLIGHT

By J. CORSON MILLER

From out of the maw of the forest he sprang, then stood  
 With his massive head held tense, and kingly high;  
 A scion of the wild—one sired in the line of the blood,  
 The sumptuous spread of antlers etched on the sky.  
 We held our breath as we hid in the shade of the cabin,  
 While the river gurgled a song, as it ambled by.

With forefeet rigidly poised in the turf on the shore,  
 And ears superbly cocked on his sleek-brown head,  
 His nostrils quivered, as he sniffed for the night-wind's lore,  
 But the off-breeze gave him no sign of doubt or of dread.  
 He bent and drank a cooling draught from the river,  
 Then, rising to his antlered height, he dropped down—dead.

## HILLS AND WIND

### I. AT TIMBERLINE

BY ETHEL ROMIG FULLER

On these foothills forests stage  
An unending pilgrimage.

Black-frosted cedars, plume-casqued firs,  
Knighthood pines in mail and spurs.

Marching upward, cheek by jowl,  
Sword brushing staff; helmet, cowl.

Till stumbling, spent, at timberline  
The sainted few attain the shrine,

Where they kneel in wide-armed bliss  
Before the great white God to kiss

His sandaled feet—absolved in death  
By the four winds of his breath.

### II. NIGHT WIND

BY EDNA GEARHART

I drop my pack and make my camp  
Beneath a treeless hill,  
Huge segment cut in calm deliberation  
From icy-glittered sky.  
I feel clean rising wind against my face,  
That dries the sweat  
With taste of tarweed, sting of cold.  
My bruised worn body  
Accepts the refuge of the earth,  
Contented with its hard stability.  
And there I follow new star-trails  
That end in deep cool dreams,  
Pervaded with white honey-sage—  
Waking, I drowse and hear the night-wind  
Whispering to the sparse dry grass.

## III. SEA WIND

BY VERNE BRIGHT

It calls me in the night of my despair  
     Beckoning down the old familiar ways  
     Of beaches bright with foamy chrysoprase,  
 Of wide seas caught in the typhoon's deadly snare.  
 Beauty has spread the net of her golden hair  
     To mesh my heart . . . over the misty bays  
     Deep in the magic midnight white stars blaze,  
 And the aureate moon climbs slowly her curving stair.

The laughter of the wind calls and the sea;  
     Dreams burn like living torches in my heart . . .  
 Oh, I was born for this, to always be  
     A wanderer, driven ever by the smart  
     Of Beauty's whip . . . Oh, I shall journey far  
     Out from this town where prisoning houses are.

## IV. WIND-BENT CEDARS

BY H. RAYNESFORD MULDER

We came upon the wind-bent cedars crouched  
 Against the dusk; they seemed to sense what sky  
 Would warp them to eventually, yet slouched  
 Beneath their hollowed cliff, came up the high  
 Forged music of a night incoming tide . . .  
 Where snow white surf with unrelenting lust  
 Makes feast of leaning rock; each wave a stride  
 Denying compromise with suppliant dust.

Yet ache of tautened roots, impassioned ways  
 Up hills, resistant strength in stone, an hour  
 With blossom, sanguine shout of thunder, haze  
 Imaged across a jeweled dawn, is dower  
 Enough to make disaster miniature  
 Where only miracle of death is sure.

## V. CINQUAIN

BY RUTH CLAY PRICE

Dried  
 Loco pods:  
 Indian calabashes  
 Fog-muffled, rattling in the wild,  
 Coast wind.



## THE LAST WORK OF NORMAN KANE

By ROLAND ENGLISH HARTLEY

WHEN Norman Kane died, early last summer, some of the smaller reviews spoke of the great loss to American literature; but in general his passing brought forth little comment. He wasn't on friendly terms with the established critics who might have given him the flourish of trumpets. One of these gentlemen, whom Kane had written of as a collector of refuse thrown out from Parnassus, remarked to a group of friends that Kane's dying just then was the best thing he could have done to preserve the legend of his talent; for as he was going into the years when revolt loses its youthful picturesqueness and showed as yet no signs of mellowing into tolerance or hardening into the prophetic note, there seemed to be nothing ahead of him but the undignified blustering of middle age.

This estimate doesn't take into account Norman Kane's last work. It couldn't have, for neither friend nor enemy had seen the work. And it will be long before any one of them is at all likely to see it.

Kane was editor of "Today" when his decree of banishment fell upon him. Before that, he had founded and managed and edited two other short-lived periodicals of the same type. Perhaps it isn't quite accurate to call them periodicals. The uncertainty of finances kept them from attaining any regularity. This dearth of funds was referred to editorially as a token of the perpetual feud between Mammon and the Muses. But the fact of the matter is that the sort of thing Kane was doing

hasn't a very wide appeal. There are very few people either so invulnerably happy or so contentedly miserable that they can hear the truth constantly with any relish.

To his own and to similar magazines, Kane was also a contributor of fiction. Some of his early short stories had a rare simplicity and vigor. They made the ugliness of life almost beautiful to contemplate. But they came back to one like a chill hand laid over the bounding heart of joy.

Kane's friends believed his genius showed itself most fully in his conversation. That has been said of many artists. And perhaps it is not hard to understand why. For when I remember Kane's flashing blue eyes, and those vivid gestures, and the rich tones his voice took on when he was moved, I can see that any trivial thing he might have said would seem to have the force of wit and wisdom.

Kane's separation from his friends came with all suddenness. Not one of them was told the reason for his stepping aside. He hid his weakness like a personal shame. Strength had always been the only thing he revered . . . and here he was with the promise of a year of pain and impotence that would end in death. He wanted no spectators of this inglorious ending. He left the city and came back to the country of his boyhood. He found a home among strangers, in the remote hills.

After the early weeks, when he had grown out of the first dull sense of utter defeat, he began to question the findings that had been pronounced

against his life. It was notorious that physicians often made mistakes; three eminent specialists might even have made the same mistake. This was a thing more easily conceivable than that Norman Kane, in the height of his mental vigor, should be tossed like a worn-out utensil onto the scrapheap. But the slow pain in his heart, that for so long he had been able to forget in the absorption of work, came week after week with a sharper insistence; and because he had trained himself to the acceptance of the inevitable, he threw off before long this weak comfort of an impossible hope. He was going to die, before his time.

From his little cabin in the orchard behind the farmhouse, a path went down to the stream-side. It was a short walk, and Kane strolled there a dozen times a day, to breathe the cool moist air in the shade of the alders and hear the creek hurrying among the rounded stones. *This* was what life should be, this life of the stream—something to go on and on. He allowed himself the sentimentality of thinking of the creek gliding by with exactly the same music when he was hidden away somewhere.

One day he found himself kneeling in the soft earth with his forehead pressed to the rough trunk of an alder. Prayer, he had always scorned; prayer was the expression of the defeated. The strong knew that the source of strength was within them. But he had come now to the end of this vaunted strength, and to defeat. And he felt the pitifulness of the plight of a man who was waiting here to die among these trees that waved their arms warmly in the sunshine, beside the stream that ran on forever in the shade.

Still, he didn't pray. He only knelt there and felt the sturdiness of the earth beneath him, and the exulting tremors of life that ran along the tree-trunk; and he loved the life he had despised. Life, just the living, was supreme over all its ugliness.

At the farm-house where his simple wants were cared for, he saw the only three persons of his new world. Some days he thought of this new world as a transition stage between his brilliant crowded past and the utter blankness that lay ahead. Again, he thought of it as a step upward toward unimagined, possible things.

The farmer and his wife and his daughter were simple, quiet, unimaginative folk. Two months before, Kane would have sneered at the cheap magazines that came to their metal mailbox, and the radio that whined imbecilities into their eager ears. But now he knew their wants as an expression of the same hunger that was in himself: a craving for a fulness of life that was denied.

The girl had been out of high school only a year or two. Her body was large and strong and her eyes were full of the urgency of living. Kane never tired of watching her at her tasks. He liked to see the sturdy swing of her shoulders as she pitched hay into the feed-rack for the cow; and he liked to watch her sure strong fingers when the milk jetted from under them into the pail.

Life was in this girl like a swelling flood. She was very sorry for the man who had come here to die. Often her eyes filled with tears as she watched him in the evening go slowly back to his

cabin. It would be several minutes before she began her singing again.

Yet these people with their fulness of vigor were far from his own closeness to the miracles of every day. They didn't see the tragic glory of a sunset, nor the poignant mystery of the dawn. One had to near death to know the beauty of life.

When he began writing again, it was this he put into his work. He wrote of all the things he had missed before. He imagined for himself the life he would choose if life were given back to him, and he wrote of it with the skill and the power and the poetry that had come to him through the years of writing only of sorrow and pain.

Sometimes, while the girl pushed her iron slowly back and forth over white things fragrant of soap and sunshine, Kane read to her what he had written. It was so strangely beautiful that her eyes grew dim. Although there was not so much of high adventure in this tale as in those that came in magazines to the mail-box, still she liked to listen. She told Kane one day, looking shyly around to him from the ironing-board, that she thought his story was almost as good as those she saw in print. He smiled so gaily that she knew she had pleased him.

In the story there was a man who had found a new life on the threshold of death. The girl knew that it was this man himself, who was distilling his longing into words like music.

There was a woman in the story too. The girl could not know, of course, that Kane had always in times past written of women as the foes of men, and that it was only since he lay here vanquished that he had come to yearn for the gen-

tle hand of love upon him. But those parts of the story where he wrote of his vision of one who was beside him in the dark cabin in hours of pain, pleased the girl especially; and it moved her deeply to think that any woman might be so blessed a gift to any man.

Yet it wasn't a romance that Kane was writing; it held too close to the inescapable facts of life to be that. Only, where he had written before of defeat, he wrote now of triumph; because he had learned that in writing of defeat he was writing of the obvious, and that there was no vision worthy of the artist which could not pierce through this to the essence of life, that was triumphant.

Often in the evening, when Kane had stopped his reading and taken up his lantern and gone out through the orchard to his cabin, the girl would sit for an hour alone in the dark of the porch, looking out across the black trees to the sky and wondering why life was so full of unaccountable things.

When the story was fully written, and read to the end, Kane gave it to the girl, a tight-pressed sheaf of written pages. He put it into her hands, her firm wide hands, that turned it slowly over and over, this strange keepsake of the man so unlike other men she had known.

She was to read these pages once in a while, he said, just to remember him when he was no longer there. Her eyes filled with heavy tears. She would *always* read it, she told him, more than anything else. And she was thinking that perhaps, if she read many times the words he had written, she would



come at last to know what he had been trying to teach her, to know what things were beautiful things.

But now, when he left her, she hid the sheaf of pages at once away out of sight. She would be ashamed to have anyone see it. It might be, she thought, only her ignorance that made her find beauty in this story. Other people might laugh at her for keeping it. She laid it carefully away.

Norman Kane did not write any more. For a few months he had held off the pain by the incantation of happy work. But now the work was done; and soon everything else was done. On the day when he was borne away to be laid beneath the tree he had chosen, the girl took out the packet of written pages and read many of them again. The man himself was here. It was foolish to cry, when he was still here.

Often she reads the long story through. Norman Kane's last work is complete now, for it has become the plot of ground where another spirit lives and grows and comes to flower.

He might have given the story to the world in the direct and usual way. But

then, since his name was a call to battle, friends and enemies would have taken sides in judgment and the work become the playground of criticism. He was very weary of all that sort of thing. One reader who should slowly learn to love his tale meant more to him than a thousand drawn by curiosity.

After each reading, the girl carefully lays the manuscript away again, in the lower drawer, beside a bundle of sweet-grass. It will probably lie there for many years. But some day, when the fulness of life within her becomes more conscious of itself, she will know how much of this she has drawn from the yellowing pages. Perhaps this understanding will come just on the eve of her marrying. Then she will feel no more shame of having kept the story; then she will proudly show it abroad; and sooner or later among those who see it there will be some one who will know it for the thing it is. Then Norman Kane's last work will come into its own. Having lived on, as he wanted it to, in one human heart, it will reach out to others.

## “THERE IS SOMETHING—”

BY SALLIE SINCLAIR MACLAY

There is something  
 About this day's stillness  
 That is like a tired heart . . .  
 Something that says "hush",  
 Trying to forget  
 The sound of last night's storm  
 In the remoteness  
 And dreaming silence  
 Of today.

## HERESY

BY ALBERT RICHARD WETJEN

SOME twelve hundred years before this era of prohibition, Li Po, the Chinese poet, supported by two courtiers and somewhat stewed, was able to stand groggily before his Emperor and upon command dash off several masterpieces which remain readable to this very day. The same gentleman, in much the same state of grogginess, died rather romantically by falling off a barge while trying to embrace the reflection of the moon. He believed, as you might say, in combining business with pleasure and he remains a model for all aspiring poets and philosophers who still happen to reside within the borders of the Celestial Empire.

I cannot claim, of course, to have reached any of the heights, bibulous or poetic, to which Li Po so gloriously ascended; but I do consider that I have imbibed sufficient disillusionment to enable me to regard life as a very unreasonable and always humorous proposition. I have, for instance, after some years and considerable expense, discovered that it is almost impossible to fill an inside straight and that one should never write letters to women. I have become resigned to the fact that all men are not honest by instinct and that the wicked do frequently prosper and live to noble and ripe old ages. Having also been tinkered with by priests, policemen and politicians I have, in short, come to agree with a very famous critic that life is a circus; with a very famous poet that life is a shame; and with a remarkable sexual athlete that it is extremely interesting. All this has nothing to do with the story, but I always think of such things when I think of Neville.

He was a wiry, dark-complexioned man of middle height, about thirty or thirty-two years old when I first met him. He was dark-haired, dark-browed, and although smooth-shaven always had a dark blueness about his lean jowls. To the best of my recollections he invariably wore tweed suits, gray felt hats with the brim pulled low over his forehead, and his eyes were glittering brown orbs behind shell-rimmed glasses. He belonged to the country club, played golf, exercised in the local Y. M. C. A. gymnasium, lunched with the Kiwanians and, being a firm prohibitionist, only got fried on Christmas, New Years, July the Fourth and his wedding anniversary. He was a graduate of a Western university and had served overseas as a lieutenant of artillery. When I became acquainted with him he held a commission in the National Guard and religiously gave up every Monday evening to drill a platoon or so of seedy-looking youths in the local armory. He was, all in all, a very admirable citizen.

We were introduced by a mutual friend, soon after my first success as a writer and my subsequent marriage and settling down in a small and thriving western city. Neville sold insurance, bonds, real estate, travel tickets and other such stuff. He was widely known as a hustler, a restless, quick, shrewd and almost terrier-like man with a fierce determination to get along.

He had a very beautiful wife, a blond girl, and they were both of them of good pioneer stock. She was slender, well-developed, clear-complexioned, and superficially bright in the way college-trained young matrons are likely to be.

She also had social ambitions, which Neville himself encouraged and apparently cherished too. Starting with very little when they were first married he worked like a horse to set himself on his feet, and when he had accomplished that, to a modest degree, he worked even harder to push further forward.

He would be in his office by eight, would have covered half the countryside by noon, and would take work home with him in the evening, excepting Mondays when he drilled in the armory, and Wednesdays when he exercised in the Y. M. C. A.

As time passed he built a substantial six-roomed house in a good neighborhood and then mortgaged it to buy a better car to go with it. His wife procured a fur coat, gave bridge teas and endorsed Art and Drama. She began to be invited to all the big functions (she was really very beautiful) and Neville bought a tuxedo and went with her when he had time. He was not liked particularly, he was too much of a worker and too grimly in earnest for that, but his wife made up for him and they climbed steadily together.

It was his grim earnestness that struck me from the first. He brought his wife round several evenings to play cards or talk, so often in fact that we became quite intimate. At least I thought we did, for I was then extremely innocent and unacquainted with the charming custom of cultivating people for business reasons. And business was about all that Neville talked of, when he wasn't talking of his wife or the late war. It was seriously debatable as to whether he did not think more of business than he did of his wife, but it is certain that he loved them both with the same grim earnestness and sincerity. He reminded

you of a terrier hanging on to a bigger dog. He seemed to regard life as a big, strong but rather stupid fellow who had to be constantly worried and dug in to. He ate, talked and slept business, and all, as far as I could see, to enable his wife to buy a better fur coat, a better car, a better diamond bracelet and a better house, which in turn meant her elevation to still more exalted social strata.

Business ordered everything he did, from joining the Masons to wasting an evening round a bridge table, a fact which I discovered after he had drawn me into a clever business deal which netted him several hundred of my dollars. That transaction completed, his visits to my home ceased with the abruptness of a definite break. It was some time before it dawned upon me that he had lost interest, and by then his wife had ceased to invite mine to her dinners and teas. It was a really remarkable phenomenon and my first annoyance past I grew even more interested in Neville. Everything he did had its definite object. Of such stuff, I considered, were giants and millionaires made. Concentration, that was it! A ruthless striding forward towards a definite goal.

Neville's home life, what there was of it, was ideal. On Sundays, and sometimes on Saturday afternoons, unless he had a golf engagement that might help business, he was to be seen in his shirt sleeves digging the weeds out of his lawn or planting flowers around his house. He landscaped the place himself (this was before he could afford to hire a gardener and before the new car was paid for) and he built an elaborate rock garden near the back porch. He was always tinkering with a hammer or a



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screw-driver, fixing the house interior, and once he went without cigarettes for a whole month to make the first payment on a fine oil painting some traveling artist was exhibiting in town.

Towards his wife he was extremely gentle and considerate. She grew accustomed to him bringing her breakfast in bed, before he started for the office. He would draw her bath water and buy the groceries, and when he came home at night he would often as not wipe the dishes. She spent her time bridging, golfing and dancing, reclining between whiles on the davenport in their front room, wrapped in a gorgeous silk dressing gown, languidly smoking a cigarette in a long holder, sipping an occasional cocktail and complaining of exhaustion or the need of some new clothes. And he seemed to love it. His whole life was wrapped up in her and in his work, or perhaps they were both so intermingled he could scarcely distinguish any differences in them. She had only to mention something she wanted and he would grimly increase speed and almost bludgeon people into buying more insurance or bonds or something.

That she was fond of him there can be no doubt, and she might have developed into a reasonably useful cook and housekeeper if he had let her. But he spoiled her, made her selfish almost against her will, a common habit of American men, but not always carried to the extremes that Neville carried it. The couple became the subject of light and good-humored comment about town, and wives frequently pointed out to their husbands how nice it would be if they were only like Tom Neville.

It is hard, in a short sketch, to make clear the man's furious and dogged energy, his grim earnestness and determin-

ation, coupled with the almost uxurious feeling for his wife. He became generally regarded as a man with a future, someone who would bear watching, and many of the town moguls he met socially and with his wife's aid, began to drop scraps of profitable business his way. He did not slacken the furious pace when this happened, but rather increased it. He could be seen almost any day down in the shopping district, striding hurriedly along, with compressed lips, frowning brows, and his eyes gleaming like purposeful pebbles behind his glasses.

Two years after I first met him, and nearly a year after the abrupt cessation of intimacies between us, he was standing at the peak, on the threshold of really big things. He had a thriving and growing business of his own, enough to employ two stenographers and a book-keeper. He had his debts paid. And he was included in every social gathering of importance which occurred. And then my wife informed me that Mrs. Neville was to have a baby, a matter which had apparently reached her by the strange and devious routes used to convey such information.

Tom Neville, I understood, was having plans drawn for a newer and bigger house, to be built in the most exclusive suburb. He was to buy a bigger and better car. His wife was to have a maid, so that the baby would not interfere with her social duties, and he was to move into a fine large office in the new bank building then going up. He was at the peak, without doubt, with higher peaks before him. He had made good. He was a living, breathing example of what energy and determination could do for a man, a concrete proof that I was wrong in holding, as I did, that nothing

in the world was worth pouring all youth and pleasure away for; though indeed it might be said that he gained his pleasure in what he did, in the very complete absorption he had in his wife and in business.

At any rate I was disturbed. It is not pleasant to have one's own pleasant and amiable theories disrupted. Man was not meant to be a machine. He had to have at least one or two comfortable vices. He had to hold true friendships, relax occasionally, act the fool at times. Life had to be enjoyed as you went along. Success was not a mechanical proposition. The gods had to smile and luck had to favor you quite largely. One should work a bit, play a bit, dream a bit, and trust to his destiny. Yet here Neville had eliminated everything that interfered with business and he had proved successful. His seeming pleasures were all carefully planned to that one end, even his golfing and his exercising in the gymnasium, the one bringing him desirable contacts, the other supposed to keep him fit, so that he could keep up his furious pace. I thought that perhaps his gardening and his tinkering about his house were symptoms of a genuine joy, but I later heard him admit he liked to "keep the place up," so that he could get a good price for it when he sold.

It resolved, then, down to the fact that the only real pleasure he gained was in doing all this for his wife, and even that, I still suspect, was an illusion concealing the desirability of having his wife rise up through the social strata and thus bringing him into communication with men more powerful and successful than himself. But at any rate, to give him the benefit of the doubt, his world was wrapped up in the slender

blond woman who was soon to have a child.

It was too perfect and too reasonable to last. Everything fitted in; brick was neatly piled upon brick. It was against all experience and against all the rules the gods have laid down. The fulfillment of desire does not come so logically and mechanically. If it did, millions would be walking the heights by virtue of determination and toil. It was all too reasonable and there must be a flaw somewhere. Life is never reasonable. Something had to break, if it was only Neville's health. Something did break, but nothing that I expected. Right in the midst of a small gathering at my home, where several friends were pointing out to me how much money I might make if I would only give up this thing and that thing and really work (I am astonishingly lazy), someone dropped in to say that Mrs. Neville was dead.

She had been taken ill, I gathered, and hurried to the hospital for a Caesarian operation. Both she and the baby had died. It was very sudden, like a snap of the fingers. She had given a dinner to a few intimates that very evening (the child was not expected for a month or so) and she had played cards up to a reasonably late hour, in perfect health. The guests left at ten. At twelve-thirty she was dead. Just like that! The gods had poked a curious probing finger into the whole structure and it had collapsed.

For the first time since I had been acquainted with him Neville missed three succeeding days at the office. He went about like a man stunned but who still retained the use of his limbs. His face was ashen beneath his blueness of beard. His mouth was slack. His eyes were dull, dazed circles without compre-

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hension of what went on before them. I really don't think he realized for almost a week that she was dead. His friends gathered his clothes and stuff from the house and took them to the hotel where he was staying. He never entered the house again.

He didn't know what to do. That was really the tragic part of it. He was a church member, but only for business reasons, and there was no comfort before the altar. He had no wholly intimate friends to turn to, outside of his relations, and he had never bothered much with them. He had no philosophy of life to support him. He had been too busy to think about or formulate one. He had not even the impulse to get drunk. Drinking, except on rare occasions, had interfered with business and he had grown out of the habit. I know most of this to be true, because on the one occasion he came to me after it happened, and I managed to get half a bottle inside him, he cried on my shoulder and talked about it all. He had not lost his interest, but he went about his affairs like an automaton, because the habit was fixed in him and the only place he knew to go was the office. His plans were all ruined, he told me. His wife was dead. His grief was deep and sincere. He believed it and so did I, at the time. Something had gone from his life and he felt it keenly.

I assured him that he would get over it and that some day he would marry again. He assured me in turn that such a thing was unthinkable. He would never love any other woman. There was nothing to say to that, of course, but one could doubt. The gods do not rule entirely without aim and the perfect lifelong loves are so rare they are written into the history of nations.

At first, however, it looked as if Tom Neville was really going to qualify. He sold his house, sold his car, sold his membership in the country club. For some months he went about with but little of his old energy left, still dazed as it were, untidy, very often unshaven, sometimes now a little stewed, the latter, I suspect, more because he did not know what to do with himself than because he really felt the need for liquor and forgetfulness. But this phase gradually passed. He straightened up, began to take an interest in life once more, and actually became human.

He spent but little time in his office and was off to play golf nearly every afternoon with men he could not possibly hope to make a deal with. He bought a new car, a snappy sports model, and he took up fishing. He even decided it was a waste of time to exercise in the Y. M. C. A. gymnasium, and he took to reading detective novels instead. He brewed passably good beer in the apartment he had rented and had evenings of poker with brown-bread-and-dill-pickle lunches. His business remained stationary, or perhaps even went back a little, until the big banker of the town one day offered him the job of renting the offices in the new bank building, the commissions from which were in themselves a substantial sum. This deal placed Neville at the top of those who followed his profession in that town, and it was surprising really that he had been chosen, for there were at least three other men who were better friends of the banker and who had been expecting recognition.

It was luck, nothing else, joined to the fact that the banker was sorry for Neville and that his daughter admired him.



It was not long before he was to be seen at the shows with this daughter, a tall, grave, dark girl with very red lips and dreamy dark eyes. She had met him at the Governor's ball once, when he had been arrayed in his National Guard uniform, and had danced with him several times. After the death of his wife she had been the first to invite him to tea, and it may be said with a reasonable amount of certainty that he had never suspected her feelings for him.

Luck again, you see. Neville, on the banker's advice, took a whole floor of offices in the new bank building, hired field men and increased his staff of stenographers. He also married the banker's daughter. He also ceased to pay much attention to business and hired a manager. He began to enjoy himself.

The story ends there, and I suppose there's really nothing to it. I find it interesting myself only when my friends are annoying me with remarks about my indolence; and then I think of those wasted years of Neville's, and of all the things he might have done.

I think then of the hours he might have spent in the orchards under the stars, lying in a soft hammock beneath the white-bloomed cherry trees. And the lazy summer afternoons when he might have stood in the cool shadows by the edges of a trout stream. And the winter nights when the frost crackled on the pavements and he might have sprawled before a good fire with a whiskey-and-soda in one hand and Casanova or Conrad in the other. And the long talks he might have had, talks lasting until the dawn, with men who were not interested in business at all.

But then, it is too late now. The years are gone. And he is happy after all.

Possibly he was happy then. He had no time, certainly, to think about whether he was or not. Yet the gods are very unreasonable, and life is very unreasonable. Here is Neville making six times what he used to make in the days when he worked so hard, and now he does scarcely any work at all. It might be said that those years of hard work gave him his present position, but how can that be? His wife is worth half a million and his uncle died soon after the marriage and left him sixty thousand of his own. And then if the banker had not been sorry for him, and his daughter not interested, one of the others would have been given the job of renting the offices in the big new building.

There is no moral to be drawn from all this, or, if there is, it is one which would meet the disapproval of all right thinking men. But I don't mean it that way. I am merely trying to justify myself when I prefer to doze in the hammock under the cherry blossoms instead of rising and going forth to make some more money. And I am merely trying to justify Li Po with his maidens and his rice wine; and Shakespeare with his long-drawn revels at the Mermaid; and the cheerful but ragged beachcomber I met at Para. The gods alone can give success but life is ours already. And life, as I insist, is a very unreasonable and always humorous proposition.

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## QUEER BUFFOON

By RUTH CLAY PRICE

I shall understand you soon:  
 When I foretell the swift typhoon,  
 Explain the butterfly's cocoon,  
 Read the hieroglyphic moon:  
 I shall understand you soon.

## HAPPINESS UP THE RIVER

BY HARRY HARTWICK

IT WAS just getting daylight as they came down to the river. Mist was lifting from the water. The sky was dark, but over in the east, light was flickering across the damp fields. Everything was cold and sleepy. The lights on the bridge down the river were still burning.

The boathouse was dark and empty. They rattled the door, but it was locked.

"We're just out of luck," said Alec. "That's all there is to it."

He went around the boathouse and peered through all the windows. When he came back, Bert and Peewee were still standing there by the door, shivering. The dampness from the river seemed to be soaking into their clothes. The air was cold.

"Well, what the devil are we going to do now?" said Bert.

Nobody answered.

Peewee shook his head.

"I can't figure it out at all."

They put down the stuff they were carrying, some bacon and potatoes and things rolled up in their blankets. Peewee went over and rattled the door of the boathouse again.

"It's locked all right," he said.

Nobody paid any attention to him. They stood there a few minutes, thinking it over. Peewee watched the door out of the corner of his eye.

Finally Alec looked around at Bert.

"What'd you ask the fellow last night, anyway?"

Bert looked surprised.

"Why, I just told him we wanted to

rent a canoe in the morning. I said about four o'clock."

"What did he say to that?"

"He said all right."

"That all?"

"Sure, that's all." Bert began to frown. "Say, listen. What's the big idea?"

Alec shrugged his shoulders.

"You talked to the guy, didn't you? Nobody else knows anything about it."

"Well, anyway, you don't need to jump all over me," said Bert. "You can do your own running around after this." He was mad. He turned and walked away. Alec and Peewee stood there and looked at each other. It didn't look very good for the trip.

In a moment, they heard Bert calling them. He was down on the landing of the boathouse. They found the stairs and went down.

Bert was standing in the darkness at the bottom. He just pointed. There was the canoe, sitting out on the dark landing with a piece of canvas draped over it. It was pretty dark, but they could see the handles of the two paddles sticking out from under the canvas.

"Well, what do you know about that?" said Peewee. He went over and looked at the canoe.

Bert looked scornful.

"Maybe after this you won't get in such a big hurry," he said.

"Listen here. I didn't say it was your fault, did I?" said Alec. He was getting mad, too.

"Well, it's all right," said Peewee,

in a hurry. "Let's don't fight before we get started."

Bert didn't say anything. He went upstairs and got the bundles. When he came back down, they took out the paddles and spread the canvas over the bottom of the canoe. The bundles they squeezed under the thwarts. Then they dragged the canoe down the wet slippery landing to the water.

Mist was all over the river. Mist was clinging to the willows along the bank. It rolled and unrolled over the dark water. Everything was quiet. The water gurgled sleepily around the supports of the landing.

"Where I ought to be right now is home working on my English," said Alec.

There was a silence. Peewee held his breath and looked at Bert. Bert looked unconcerned. He was watching the river.

Peewee got uneasy. He tried to laugh.

"All right, come on, boys. Let's drop the old scow in the river."

It was getting more daylight. The river with the light glimmering on it looked grey and silent. It looked thick and even warm. But as they slid the canoe into the river, some of the water splashed on their hands. It was icy cold.

"All I have to say," said Alec, "is that if it stays this cold, we'll all freeze to death."

"Oh, it'll warm up in a little while," said Peewee, quickly.

Bert was silent for a few moments. Peewee waited helplessly. Finally Bert sighed. He moved his feet.

"Well, I guess we all have our little troubles." He laughed nervously.

"Sure. We all have our troubles," said Peewee, looking at Alec.

There was a silence.

"I guess I don't feel good today, is all," said Alec, at last. He bent down to get into the canoe.

Bert didn't say anything. He held the canoe carefully while Alec got in and balanced his way up to the seat in the bow. Then Peewee climbed in and sat down on the bottom of the canoe between the middle thwarts.

"Pretty soft for me," said Peewee.

"Don't worry," said Alec, laughing. "You'll get to paddle before it's all over."

Bert got in last and shoved off from the landing. The water made a noise around the prow.

"We're on our way," laughed Peewee. He held onto the gunwales a little nervously.

Bert and Alec paddled without saying anything. The mist was rolling swiftly over the water. It was as if the light growing in the east were rolling the mist before it. The canoe rocked unsteadily. The water splashed up onto the handles of the paddles.

"Let's get going," said Bert. "It's cold." He began to paddle faster.

"Boy, you're sure a hot paddler!" said Peewee.

Bert grinned.

"Now what's the matter?"

"What's the matter? You're splashing water all over me, that's all!"

"Oh, don't let a little thing like that worry you."

Alec, up in front, laughed. Bert laughed, too.

"A little water'll do you good," said Bert.

## The Frontier

They were getting out into the country. The paved highway that ran north out of the city followed along the right bank for a while. Then it turned into the trees and left them alone.

"This is great," said Peewee. He stretched lazily and tried to wrap himself up in the canvas. "I could go to sleep just as easy as pie."

"I guess you might just as well," laughed Bert. It was fun to tease Peewee.

Peewee sat up and turned around.

"How about it, Bert? Want to change off a while?"

"I should say not."

"I just as soon. If you want me to."

Bert laughed.

"This is a man's job. It'd get you down in no time."

Peewee looked disgusted.

"Well, any time you say."

They were silent again. Bert and Alec paddled steadily. Finally Alec lifted his paddle and rested. Bert stopped, too, and let the canoe drift along smoothly on the water.

"After you get onto the hang of it, you can go for hours without getting tired," said Bert.

"I'll bet," said Alec, without turning around.

Bert started paddling again. He looked thoughtful.

"You sure got the dumps today," he said.

Alec took up his paddle with a sigh.

"Well, it's a cinch you never had a five thousand word theme to get in with only a week to do it. You'd have worse than the dumps, all right."

"Hope you didn't come to college to study," mumbled Peewee from the bot-

tom of the canoe. Bert laughed. He tried to sound consoling.

"Why, what the devil, that's nothing! I'm back about two weeks in English myself."

"Well, I don't care. It's no joke," said Alec.

"Who said it was? I tell you, I think sophomore year is even harder than freshman year."

"It sure is."

They were silent for a while.

"Say, what's in these blankets of yours?" said Peewee, raising himself up and dragging one of the bundles out from under the thwart behind him.

"Get out of that stuff," said Alec, twisting around.

"Well, when are we going to eat?" said Peewee, putting the bundle back.

"Not for a long time yet," said Bert.

"I brought some bacon," said Alec. "But we ought to save that for dinner."

"Did you bring that cake you said you were going to?" asked Peewee, turning round to Bert.

"That's for dinner," said Bert. "You don't get none till dinner."

"Well, we can have cheese and bread for breakfast, anyway," said Peewee. "I got about six pounds of cheese."

Bert laughed.

"Boy, you better watch out. You know what cheese'll do to you."

"Did anybody bring apples?" asked Alec.

"I did. A couple of dozen or so," said Peewee.

"I bet I could make a meal off apples alone," Alec mused.

"I brought a knife, too," added Peewee. "And a fork to cook bacon on."



"You'll make somebody a nice wife all right," said Bert.

Alec laughed.

After that, they paddled along talking. The sun began to warm the river. The mist had all rolled away, and the air was chill and shining. The bright sky had a blue, washed look. It was going to be a nice day. Along the shore, birds twittered in the trees.

"It's going to be a peach of a day," said Peewee.

"I'll say!" Bert agreed. "If it doesn't get too hot."

"You mean 'if it doesn't rain,' " said Alec, laughing.

Bert stopped paddling.

"I'll say this much. You've sure got a swell sense of humor today." He was getting tired of the way Alec was acting.

"Look here," said Peewee, sitting up. "If you two are going to fight this way all the time, we might just as well turn around and go back."

"All right, all right," said Alec, still laughing. Bert started paddling again.

They began to hear a rumbling noise ahead. It got louder as they went on. A brick smokestack swam out above the trees over there.

"Listen," said Peewee, holding up his hand. "I can hear the dam."

Alec listened.

"We must be nearly to Coralville," he said.

"About another mile is all," said Bert. "That's all. Just another mile."

Pretty soon the river curved to the right. Just ahead, on the far bank, some houses mixed with the green trees. Farther on was a long brick powerhouse with a tall smokestack in its cen-

ter. Nobody was in sight. The town seemed to be still asleep.

They could see the dam up by the powerhouse. It lay in a shining flash across the river. There was something exciting about the way the spray sparkled in the sunlight, and the noise. They had to shout to each other as the noise got louder.

"Sit tight," shouted Bert at the top of his voice. "I'll swing her into the portage."

They were just below the dam, and the water was rushing and fizzing around the canoe. Bert turned the canoe into the narrow inlet that led off to the portage. The roar of the dam seemed to set the surface of the still backwaters to quivering.

In a moment, they glided up onto the mud at the end of the inlet. They climbed out and dragged the canoe across the short neck of land. As soon as they had pushed it into the water on the other side, they all climbed in again. Peewee tried to hang back and get in last. But Bert shoved him on in.

"Well, that's good enough for me," laughed Peewee, getting in.

Bert picked up his paddle.

"Maybe Alec'd like to change off for a while."

"Oh, don't worry about me," said Alec with a sigh, "I'll get along some-way."

Bert stopped paddling. He looked mad. "For God's sake, now what's the matter!" he exclaimed.

"Nothing's the matter, if you want to know."

"You don't know, yourself. You must be nuts!"

Alec was silent.

"Well, I didn't want to paddle any-

## The Frontier

way," said Peewee. "Don't get that idea into your head!"

There was a silence, and then Bert and Alec laughed a little.

"I'm not that crazy," laughed Peewee. He felt relieved.

They started out from the portage. The water was quiet and deep above the dam. Gradually the noise faded away, and Coralville shifted around behind a curve in the river.

The air got warmer. The sunlight began to have a hot smell. Paddling near the banks, they could smell the warm mud and willows. It was pretty nice. Ahead of them, the river stretched out brown and glittering. Now and then, it narrowed till the canoe slid beneath the willows drooping along the banks. Mosquitoes danced around their heads as they paddled in the shade.

They ate breakfast in the canoe. Peewee opened up the blankets and handed out the stuff. It was cheese and apples and some bread.

"Is that all we got?" asked Bert.

"What do you want for nothing?" Peewee laughed.

Bert went on eating.

"Well, of course if you're not paddling, you don't get very hungry, I suppose."

Peewee sounded mad. "I told you about a hundred times that I'd paddle!" he said.

Bert looked surprised and a little sheepish. "Oh, I don't mind it. I'm doing fine. I like to paddle."

He got red in the face and began to scowl.

"There's a certain trick to it. Besides, you couldn't stick it out more than about five minutes. You don't know your stuff."

Peewee said nothing.

"That's why," added Bert. He was still flushed.

It began to get warmer. Bert took off his shirt and paddled that way.

"I bet it wouldn't take a fellow long to get good and sunburned," he said.

"Oh, I don't know," said Peewee. He let his hands drag to the wrists in the cool water. Up in front, Alec paddled steadily away. The sun beating down upon them made their backs and shoulders throb. It wasn't bad at all. Only it made them feel sleepy. The air smelled good.

Alec stopped to rest a moment. Bert grinned.

"What's the matter up there? I hope you're not tired already?"

"Oh no. Nothing like that."

Bert laughed and paddled harder for a moment.

"Hey!" said Alec.

After that, nobody said anything for a long time. Peewee began to study the banks slipping by on each side. They passed a clump of cottonwood trees. In some places, cornfields ran right down to the river. Farther on, a brown cow grazed along the bank. Across the fields, a white farmhouse peeked above the pasture grass. Beyond, were a lot of rolling hills, washed in sunshine and smoky blue air. They passed several wooden landings built out into the water. Some waterstained rowboats rocked clumsily on the ends of frayed ropes. Now and then, a man fishing on the bank waved at them.

About one o'clock, they stopped for dinner. Bert headed the canoe up a bayou, and they looked about for a good place. The water in the bayou looked green and stagnant. The thick

water bunched up in a little smooth roll under the prow of the canoe. On both sides, the willows were as dense as bushes. The banks were nothing but slippery mud.

Finally they found a spot that didn't look so bad. They turned in. Bert paddled hard and rammed the nose of the canoe into the mud bank. The prow slipped up onto the soft mud and then slipped down again with a sucking sound. It left a notch in the mud. Bert jammed the canoe up again, and Alec grabbed a willow branch till he could climb out and tie the canoe. Pee-wee and Bert got up and walked along the bottom of the canoe until they could step out upon the bank. As they moved around, the canoe rocked and tapped the water with its stern. They got pretty muddy getting out.

"Just wait. The mosquitoes'll eat us alive in about five minutes," said Alec.

Bert whirled around. His face was red and angry.

"Listen!" he said, "I'm getting sick and tired of hearing you bawl around. If you don't like this place, you know what you can do!"

"Now look here," said Pee-wee, "there's no use in getting mad."

"I can't help it. He gets on my nerves!" exclaimed Bert.

Alec didn't say anything. His face kept getting whiter.

"Well, let's get some wood," said Pee-wee. "We can't stand here all day."

He walked away. Bert and Alec kept on standing there. Finally Bert turned and started to pick up wood that was lying around. A few minutes later, Alec dropped his hands to his sides and

gave a long sigh. Then he started to gather wood, too.

They picked up all the dry wood they could find. Most of it was damp. While Bert was trying to break off some dead limbs from a small tree, he heard Alec start swearing.

"What's the matter, Alec?" said Bert, starting over.

Alec stumbled out of the willows. He was all covered with mud. He was mud from head to foot.

"It's awful," moaned Alec.

"I'll say it's awful," grinned Pee-wee, walking over to them.

"I've had a terrible time all day. One thing after another," said Alec bitterly.

"It's tough all right," agreed Bert. He was beginning to feel sorry for Alec.

"I don't feel good anyway."

"Well, never mind," said Bert. "We'll fix you up someday." He helped Alec scrape off the mud.

"After we get the fire going, you can dry your stuff, and the mud'll come right off."

They built a fire and fried the bacon that Alec had in his blanket. Then they spread out the blankets and began to eat. Everything tasted good.

"I think I'd feel better if we had a little coffee," said Alec, rubbing at the dried mud on his pants.

"We haven't got anything to make it in," said Bert.

"I know it."

They ate until everything was gone, even the cake.

"It kind of looks like we should've brought more," laughed Pee-wee.

They felt good. It was quiet and nice there on the bank. A cool breeze had sprung up, and now and then the

sun went behind a cloud. Everything was comfortable. The breeze rustled the willow thicket behind them.

"I know something we forgot to bring," said Alec.

"What's that?" said Peewee.

"The most important thing of all, too."

"Well, what is it?"

"Water."

Peewee looked shocked.

"That's right. What do you know about that!"

Bert laughed.

"Water? What more do you want?" He waved a hand towards the river. "There's plenty of it. You got a whole river full of it."

"You can't drink river water," said Peewee.

"Why not?"

"Do you want to die?"

"Why? What's wrong with it?"

"It's dirty and full of germs. That's all."

"You're crazy. I'd just as soon drink it as any other water."

"Well, maybe you would. But I wouldn't."

The sound of oars clacking in oarlocks echoed from up the river. It sounded like someone chopping wood off in the timber someplace. From where they were sitting, they could see stretches of the river through the trees. They watched. Presently a wide flat-bottomed rowboat came down the river. A rough looking fellow was in it. He looked like a river rat. Their fire must have attracted his attention, for he looked over his shoulder towards them as he passed. He watched them, rowing with his eyes on the shore, rowing

slowly. Finally he passed out of sight down the river.

"I don't like that fellow's looks at all," said Alec.

"What's the matter with him?" asked Bert.

"Nothing. Only he looks too hard-boiled to suit me. That's all."

"Well, what do we care how hard-boiled he looks?"

"I know. But I just don't like the way he kept looking over this way."

"He was kind of tough looking, all right."

"There's a lot of bootleggers live up here," said Peewee.

Bert winked at Alec.

"How do you know?" he said to Peewee.

"I read in the paper about the police coming up here after them in a motorboat," said Peewee.

Bert laughed.

"All right, you drunkard."

They all laughed.

Gradually they lapsed into silence. Bert leaned against a tree and closed his eyes. Peewee watched the fire. Alec kept looking down towards the bank where the canoe was. He began to act nervous. He stood up and sat down a couple of times. Finally Bert noticed him.

"What's wrong with you?" he said.

"Do you suppose that canoe's all right down there?"

"All right? What would be wrong with it?"

"Well, we can't see it from here. Somebody might come up and steal it, and we wouldn't know anything about it."

"Nobody's going to steal the boat. Quit worrying."



"If somebody did steal it, where would we be then?"

"We'd be right here, I guess," said Peewee.

Bert laughed. Alec didn't look convinced.

"Do you know how much a canoe like that costs?"

"How much?" said Bert.

"Seventy dollars."

"Yes, but this old wreck isn't any good, though."

"That wouldn't make any difference. We'd have to pay it anyhow."

Bert shook his head.

"Not me."

"You'd have to."

"Why would I?"

"They'd take your credits or something."

"They have a way all right," added Peewee.

"What way?" said Bert, turning to Peewee.

"Never mind. They have, just the same."

"Well, if they have, why don't you spit it out?"

"That's all right."

Bert looked at him for a moment.

"You don't know what you're talking about. That's all that's the matter."

They all looked gloomily at the fire. The wind was turning cooler, and the sun was slipping beneath clouds more frequently. The breeze had a funny smell.

"I wouldn't be surprised if it rained before we got back," said Alec. "It smells like rain."

"I hope not," said Peewee.

"Just take a look over there," said Bert.

They looked.

To the south, above the thickets, a mass of green thunderheads had piled up in the sky. Even as they watched, the breeze seemed to carry them the sound of thunder.

"Did you see it lightning over there?" said Peewee.

"It sure is going to storm," said Bert.

Alec started rolling up the blankets. They hurried and put out the fire. As quickly as they could, they packed the blankets in the canoe.

When they finally got ready to go, the storm looked worse than ever. The big clouds were piling up nearer and nearer, and the wind was stronger.

"It didn't take us long to get started, did it?" said Bert.

"That old storm isn't wasting any time either," said Alec.

Peewee held out his hand, palm-upward. "It's starting to rain now."

It was sprinkling already, the rain falling in the river with a whispering sound.

They paddled fast. It was getting darker every minute. But the rain was letting up. By four o'clock, it was pretty dark, and a cold wind was wrinkling the river. Their clothes were wet. They had to paddle fast to warm up. Peewee wrapped up in the blankets.

By six o'clock, it was dark. But they went along as rapidly as possible. They had to paddle close to the shore and trust to memory to know where the bends in the river were.

Presently they passed a lighted window on the shore. Alec peered into the darkness.

"I know where we are now," he said.

"Where?" said Bert.

"We're about a mile this side of Coralville. That light's the old shack by the quarry."

"I guess you're right at that," Bert agreed.

They could hear the sound of voices coming from the shore. Suddenly the sound stopped, the door of the shack opened, and somebody came out. They could hear a woman shout something and a man answer her from down the river a ways. Then there was the sound of somebody running along the bank. And then silence. It was all pretty creepy.

"What do you suppose they were doing?" said Peewee.

Nobody answered. They were listening. But everything was quiet.

"What was it, do you suppose?" Peewee whispered again.

"Well, I could make a guess," said Bert, laughing.

"It probably wasn't that at all," said Alec.

Bert laughed. "Don't kid yourself. You sure got a lot to learn."

There was a silence while they paddled. It was still thundering, but most of the storm had passed over. It would rain for a few minutes, and then stop. Then it would begin again.

About seven-thirty they came to the portage. By the time they reached the boathouse, it was nine. It began to rain again, just as they got there.

## MEEK OF OREGON

By VERNE BRIGHT

Meek marched out from old St. Louis;  
Fought the Sioux, and the grizzly bear  
At Stinking Water. Said: "That time  
This child mought' near lost his hair!"  
Meek of the mountains trapped the beaver;  
Fought for a maid of dusky hue;  
Came to Oregon and settled down,  
Drew his steaming furrows true.  
Meek of the mountains at Champoeg  
Fought for a nation: his chivalry,  
Iron and stone on time's high headland,  
Stands like a crag that fronts the sea.

## FIFTEEN HUNDRED MILES

BY LUCY M. C. ROBINSON

Trains slide across South Dakota;  
 Heavy trains, yellow under hot suns,  
 Dull orange when frost hardens rough brown hills.  
 Bored travelers yawn in blue plush Pullmans,  
 Gaze at unrolling emptiness,  
 Groan because one mile looks like the last and the next mile,  
 Because South Dakota is not Chicago.  
 Trains slide across brown prairies and weathered rocks,  
 Their yellow the shifting color of rattle-snake yellow and bronze . . .  
 Protective coloration for travelers slow, sluggish and cold.  
 Trains slide like fat snakes on the steel  
 And hiss at the flying fence-posts.  
 The miles slide over the insolent hills  
 Reaching elusive horizons.

Escaped from an alien town, with a lifting heart  
 One traveler watched South Dakota;  
 Watched the procession of brown buttes and plains  
 March into Montana . . .  
 Invade Montana, where afternoons sometimes are hot  
 And sometimes cold as the hell of the hot-blooded Vikings;  
 Watched for familiar cow-punchers in wide hair-pants and bandanas  
 Galloping hard across unfenced lands.  
 What she saw was a Ford of insouciant manner  
 Snooted into the ditch by a passing uproarious Packard.

Montana is like that . . .  
 Bigger than all out-doors, staring untamed at blue heavens,  
 Loneliness bare to indifferent suns,  
 Loveliness sweet with the untouched beauty of freedom.  
 Infested on lonely roads with tourists who crawl home  
 Scared and shaken, unknowing and blind,  
 To the safeties of State Street.

Like some Gargantuan toy,  
 The traveler's idle fancy planted the Wrigley towers  
 High on the hump of hills  
 East of Round-up, Montana.  
 Why east of Round-up? . . . There was plenty of room there.  
 Plenty of space to surround forty stories and lose them.

Tenants swarmed out to seek the smooth sidewalks of Michigan Avenue,  
Where nothing molests or annoys the pedestrian  
On days when machine-gun squads picnic elsewhere.  
Tenants stared aghast at the blue expanse of Montana . . .  
Too much cosmos for little excuse-it-please egos.  
They scuttled hurriedly sidewise  
Into familiar shelter of stone and steel and Chicago.  
A small contemptuous wind pursed scornful lips in the shadows,  
To blow the whole blasphemous picture forever away from Montana;  
Laughter filled the home-coming heart in the Pullman  
As the long train rushed with triumphant speed  
Across fifteen hundred miles.

## NEW SOIL RISES AGAINST A MAN

BY G. EDWARD PENDRAY

There is a strange thing about new soil; it rises  
    against a man; refuses taming; it is a law  
    above laws—  
New soil, lying heavy or light, rises against a man;  
    whether soil in valleys or soil in hills;  
There is a thing about such soil, the strength of it:  
    passive yet refusing; it is resentful, it is  
    indifferent.  
(Oh, I myself have known new soil, tasted it, smelt it,  
    passed fingers through the fresh cloddiness of it,  
    testing rebellion;  
I have known how it is to lay out crops in such soil:  
    I have known crops sickening with death; Oh for  
    fertility, Oh for productiveness!  
Oh for a weapon against the malice of new-turned soil!)

Many are they who have passed up into these hills; the  
    creaking of wheels, the weariness of backs!  
Slowly, slowly passed the wheels, the cattle with cloven  
    hoofs, the men and mules, sheep; women even, and  
    the young.  
All these have passed up into the hills, where there  
    was new soil, new and free, and of a great  
    indifference!  
The clanking of stay-chains, the spatter of guns, yes,  
    and the high clear dust at noon, over a field.



And the whispering of wind among dry stalks, the cry  
at dusk, the breaking of whips at great distances,  
Passages cleft in the rocks, violence and death; stones  
crumbling and falling, pain and the dry earth  
underfoot,

The slowly conquering yoke, the hammer of iron upon  
iron, dust rising slowly like a pillar of smoke above  
ancient fire—

(These have I known, and the malice of soil which broke  
but would not bear, and the cry of wild things  
afar.)

Here passed the wheels, slowly, slowly, moving into the  
limitless hills;

Here passed the wheels of Hans the Dutchman, of Eli who  
placed his faith in God, of many such—

The wheels of men from east and south, from Texas, Iowa,  
Pennsylvania; from sea and over sea;

Swedes and Englishmen, these came and the Russian, and  
the French; Germans settled here; many men of  
many bloods:

There was a thin, gray stream, rattle and clash; there  
was a movement in the air, and a hushing of the  
wild birds on the plain.

Oh the plows in spring! Plows growling dry or wet—the  
shameless blade, the sensuous, shameless blade,  
writhing in soil!

Here passed the wheels, and many came passing away again;  
some stayed: There was a strong wind of desire—

Desire moving in clouds by day, in rivers and excellent  
sounds and breathing by night; desire which was  
matchless desire.

(Oh there is a force more moving strong than resisting  
soil: it is the high dust at noon, cleft passages  
in rocks, the call from hill to hill—

Desire of desire is this, rising and rising, it will  
prevail!)

## THE DESERT TRAIL: 1847

BY JAMES MARSHALL

Out in the valley, in the heat-swept valley,  
Golden in the sun-haze, hot sand sifted,  
Silence in the canyons, silence in the valley,  
Silence on the high peaks, white cloud-drifted;  
Out where the valley sloped down to the salt lake  
Shining in the sunflood, crystal white,  
Close to the sand clung the one lone cedar,  
One black shadow in the hot, bright light—  
One lonely tree in the great salt valley—  
\* \* \*

Then thru the hills came the wheels' quick shrilling,  
Down thru the canyons came the tramp of hard men,  
Prodding the bull-teams, tired, unwilling—  
Wagons lurched thru the bouldered canyons,  
Rock walls echoed as the Mormons trod,  
Fighting the heat that the rocks reflected,  
Weary and trail-worn, praising God.  
Quoting texts from the Book of Mormon,  
Hoarse-voiced help for a stumbling boy,  
Whispered aid for a gaunt-faced woman:  
"Man is, Sister, that he might have joy!"  
\* \* \*

Down thru the canyon wound the creaking wagons,  
There in the first one wet hands clung  
Fevered to the blankets.

There lay the leader,  
White-faced, weary-eyed Brigham Young;  
Ahead thru the heat waves, there lay the desert,  
Yellow sand, white salt and one lone tree—  
"God help the Saints," cried the marching Mormons  
Gazing at the hills past the dead salt sea—  
But Brigham Young raised his fevered frame  
And wiped the sweat from his pain-white face,  
He looked at the hills and he shouted: "Glory!  
Drive on, Brothers, for this is the place!"  
\* \* \*

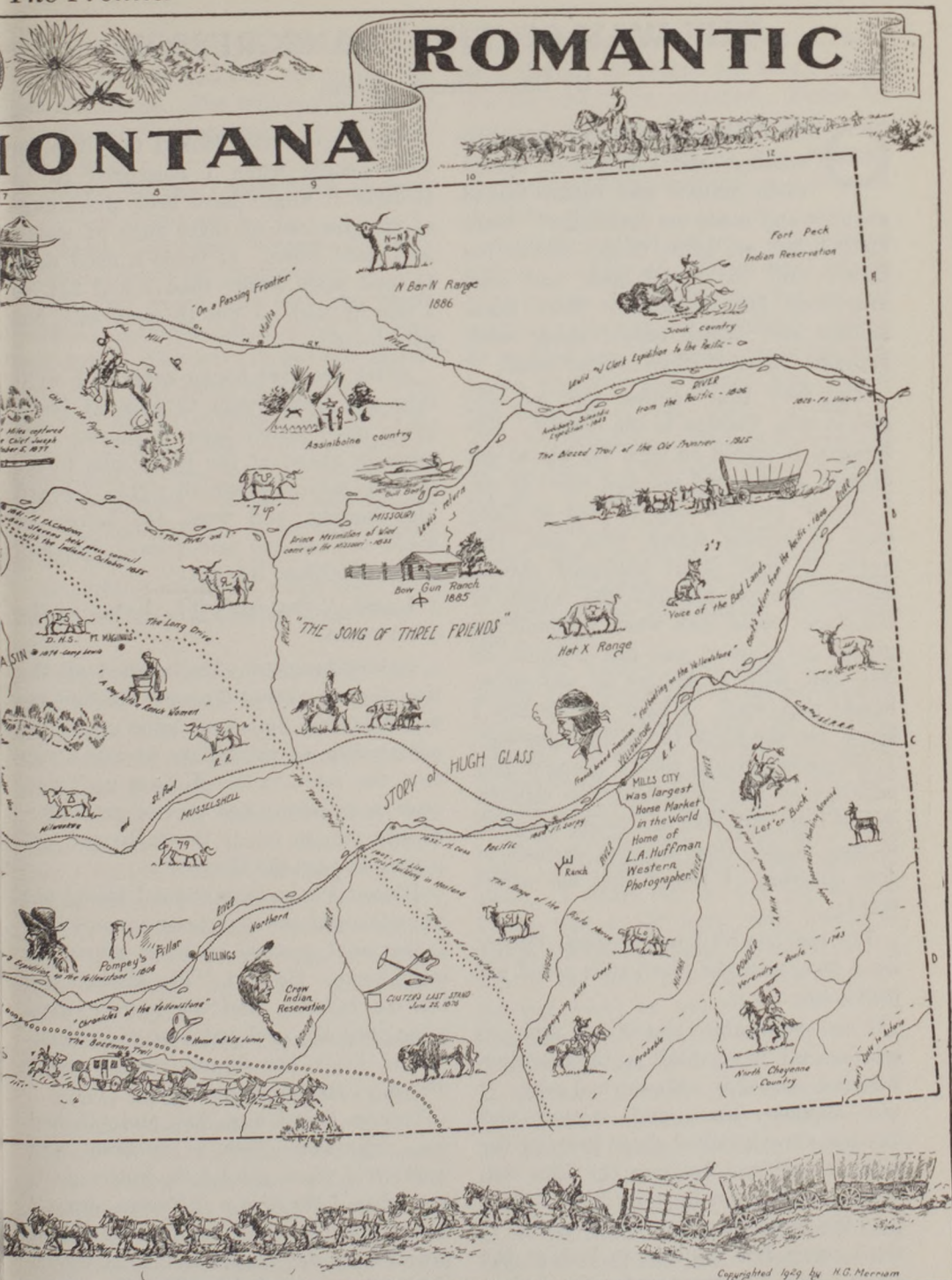
Drive on, Brothers, in the creaking wagons,  
Outspan the teams in the desert's heart,  
Fight down the desert and bring down the water,  
Each hard shoulder to its toil-tough part—  
\* \* \*

Now in the desert grow the trees by the million,  
Now in the desert spreads the cool green sod,  
A man-made garden in a mountain Eden—  
But they give their thanks to the Mormon God:  
"Build on, Brother! Death does not destroy!  
Man is, Brother, that he might have joy!"



The map shown above in two-sections may be had closed up in one section, wall size, 17x25 inches, printed on buff ledger. This interesting map will be mailed by the Circula-





tion Manager of THE FRONTIER to any address for one dollar or with a year's subscription to THE FRONTIER for two dollars. The small size will be mailed for fifty cents.



## THE WAY OF THE TRANSGRESSOR

BY GRACE STONE COATES

ONE THING I did was just like another, and I forgot it, except when mother and father talked about it and made me remember.. Once mother left me alone to get dinner for father and the hired men, and once everybody left me alone. Both times mother and father talked about what happened until it stayed in my mind.

The first time mother left me, she had to take Teressa to the dentist. She thought it would be hard for me to get dinner, so she told me just what to do. I was to put one cup of rice in three cups of boiling water, with salt, and begin to cook it at half-past eleven. Mother showed me how the hands of the clock would look when I should begin to get dinner, and put a paper on the wall with a picture of the clock-hands that way. I kept telling her I knew, but she made the picture anyway. I did know, except that I thought five minutes on the clock was one minute. When I sat still five spaces on the clock it was twenty-five minutes instead of five minutes. I found that out afterward.

The rice was all I had to cook. Father liked rice, and the hired men could eat cold meat.

I set the table almost as soon as mother and Teressa left in the morning. I built a good fire. We burned cobs. It was summer time, and mother and Teressa always talked about keeping the kitchen cool and keeping the flies out. When the fire was burning hard I went into the front room to look at books. I went every few minutes to look at the clock. The fire went out twice before it was time to cook the rice.

One cup of rice looked too little for four people when I measured it. I thought it might have been three cups of rice instead of three cups of water, so I used three. It made a good deal. It took more water than I had hot, so I put in cold. I put in more salt, but not enough.

After the rice began cooking I went into the front room to look at books again until father came to dinner. He came in ahead of the hired men to see if I was getting along all right. I heard him coming, and went out before he could call me and said I was. He said, "Gee Whiliker, it's hot!"

I said, "Yes, isn't it? I stay in the other room."

Father laughed. He laughed all the time he was eating dinner. He told me to get a large plate and set it under the butter dish, so the butter wouldn't run onto the table cloth. He got up twice, once to get sugar and once to get water. It was fun to sit at the table and ask people to pass me things.

Dinner was so easy to get I would not have thought about it again, except that father told mother about it when she came home. He said, "The kitchen was like an inferno, and the butter swimming; but the cook sat cool and unconcerned while the dinner cooked itself. She is of the earth, earthy."

Teressa heard him, too, and pinched me. She said, "Oh, it is sweet and wonderful when *you* let the butter melt, but when *I* do it is a different story." She pinched me more, on places she had pinched the day before so it hurt worse. While she pinched she said, "How wonderful to be such a wonderful child, you

## The Frontier

little simpleton!" Then she made me say I loved her, and held me on her lap and rocked me. She told me the poem:

*See by the moonlight 'tis past midnight*

*Time kid and I were home an hour and a half ago!*

I liked that poem, because the way she said it made my chest shake.

The day every one left me alone mother and father talked about it a long time before they left. I did not understand why they hated to leave me. People were on the outside of me anyway, and it didn't make much difference whether they were outside close, or outside farther off. When I told mother this she told me not to be silly trying to act wise.

Something happened while they were away that they talked so long about I cried.

Before they left mother said, "Be a good girl. When it is dinner time put the small table cloth on the table, and sit down and eat just as we always do. And be a good girl."

Father told me things, too, but they were things not to do—funny things that I couldn't have done anyway, like hiding the end of the road so he couldn't finish coming home. Mother didn't think they were funny. As father got into the buggy he said, "And don't hack the knives."

Mother said, "Don't be bitter, Henry. Those things are past."

Father said, "Nothing is ever past."

I knew what father meant about the knives. When Augusta lived at home, before father sent her away to her grandmother, she hacked knives. Augusta was a very bad girl. At least, I supposed she was bad, but when I said, "I hate Augusta," mother was angry. "Augusta was always a good sister to

you," she said, "she loved you and took care of you. If you do not love her you are the one to be ashamed. Never let me hear you say that again as long as you live." If I was to love Augusta she couldn't have been bad, so I stopped thinking about it.

Augusta hacked knives. She washed dishes standing on a little stool at the pantry sink, and father scolded her for wasting soap and for dawdling. When he scolded her she would draw her eyebrows together and watch him out of the corners of her eyes. When he wasn't looking she would hack the edges of two knives together. She did worse things. I didn't know what. When father was angry at Augusta, mother would take Teressa and me and go walking thru the fields. When we came back Augusta would be studying arithmetic, and crying.

If the knives were hacked father would take them out to the blacksmith shop. I asked mother why, but she said, "Hush!" so sharply I didn't ask again. Father made Augusta go with him, and mother would not let me go along.

After father said, "Nothing is ever past," and drove away, I was entirely alone. I went out to the pig corral. There was a tall corn crib beside it where I liked to climb. I would sit on top of the corn pile and make fun of the pig when he squealed. He would sometimes put his feet on top of the fence below me, and slant his nose up at me, and I would pretend the corn rolled under me and slid me down into his pen. I would pretend I ran for the fence, and the pig caught a piece of my dress just as I climbed over it. If I pretended hard my heart would beat and frighten me. Then I would throw ears of corn to the pig to make him stop looking at me. When father

cleaned out the corral he was annoyed about the pig's eating so much.

While I was sitting on the corn I began remembering about the knives. I thought about them, and then I wondered about them. I wondered why Augusta hacked them. There was something exciting and dark about her doing it. The pig had gone to sleep. I climbed down and went to the house, and into the pantry to look at the knife box. It was on the lowest pantry shelf, above my head, so I had to have a chair to see into it. I took a chair from the kitchen, not a cane-seated one, so my feet wouldn't break it.

When I tapped knives together it made little pains run up and down my legs. I wondered if the knives hurt. The edges caught together and it made a rough feeling in my wrists when I pulled them apart. The first two knives were not any fun. I laid one of them down and tried another and another. I changed both knives, but they were all alike; none of them were any fun. I decided to wait until sometime when father and I were talking together, and promise not to do it but ask him to show me how to hack knives the way it was wrong to.

I put the knives away, and the chair, and went back to the pig. He was awake. After I fed him all he would eat it was time for my own dinner. I set the table and ate, and cleared it and washed the dishes. When I dried my knife it caught a thread on the tea towel and puckered it.

After dinner there was nothing to do, so I decided to scrub the kitchen. It wasn't dirty, but Teressa always scrubbed it when mother was away. I scrubbed the first part hard, and the last part not so hard. Each board was worn most in the middle, so the edges

stood up. It was easiest to dry them the long way, so I dried them cross-ways. I thought the hardest way would be most right.

When mother and father and Teressa came home they brought me a present. It was a bag of figs. I had never seen figs before. After supper, mother acted queer. She put me to bed early and she and father talked. They talked the next day, and kept sending me away from them. Teressa wanted to scold me for scrubbing the floor, but mother wouldn't let her. Teressa said it would take three scrubbings to get it into shape again. It wasn't out of shape. The next day father didn't go to plow. Mother sent Teressa outdoors and called me in where she and father were. They asked me why I had hacked the knives. I had forgotten all about it because it hadn't been in my mind. Not understanding about it made it as if I hadn't done it, and I said quick, "I didn't."

Mother said, "You hacked the knives, and that was wrong. But it is a great deal worse to deny it. You must tell the truth about why you did it."

I said I did try to hack them but didn't know how, and father said, "You knew how all too well."

I tried to explain about it, and they asked me more and more questions. They asked things that had not been in my mind before, whether Augusta had taught me to do it. Father's face looked white and thin. He had never paid so much attention to anything I did, before. He said, "If I *knew* she did it to flout me, if I *knew* she did it in scorn of me, to fling back into my face the villainy of that infernal—"

Mother said, "Stop! There is no mystery about it, except that you should have been so short-sighted as to suggest



it to her. It would never have occurred to her otherwise."

They asked me more questions, and mother began to talk about the other time I had been alone and cooked too much rice. She asked if I didn't suppose she knew how much rice to cook. I said I was afraid I had made a mistake listening. They talked to me until I cried. I cried so hard that when I looked at their faces their cheeks stretched out in wavery lines, and if I half-shut my eyes, streaks of light came from their faces toward me. I was so interested I forgot to feel bad, and they were discouraged with me.

Father went to the pantry and got the box of knives. He said, "For your punishment you must turn the grindstone while I grind out the nicks." I thought he was making a joke, because Teresa and I always wanted to see who could turn the grindstone. Usually he let Teresa, because she was less erratic. I looked at him and laughed, but his eyes looked down at me, small and blue.

I turned the grindstone until my arms were tired. When they were tired the wheel went slower and slower until it stopped. Father said, "Keep on turning."

I explained about my arms. He said, "Indeed!" He looked at me, whistling, and said, "Indeed!" again, "Tell your sister to come here."

Before I could start he turned and called her. He called her *Dick*. He said, "My son, Richard, will you turn the grindstone for your father?" He called her Richard because she was Richard the Lion Hearted. Teresa said, "Yes . . . baby." She meant me. Before she began to turn the grindstone she reached back with her heel and stepped on my foot.

Father sent me to the house to talk

to mother. I went. I explained about my arms, and she said I must learn that the way of the transgressor was hard, and that I should be ashamed to let Teresa do my work. I smiled because I knew a secret about Teresa that I didn't tell. She liked to do things after she was tired, to see whether she could.

Mother asked me if I thought it was fair to make extra work for father, when he should be out plowing. I asked, "What work?" She said, "Grinding the knives you hacked."

I sat without moving. When I found out things I had wondered about it made me excited inside so I forgot to be sorry for things I had done. I said, "It wasn't wrong to hack the knives." I meant it wasn't wrong in a way I couldn't understand. Mother picked me up by the arms and set me down hard on my feet. She shook me until my head jerked back and forth. She said, "I can not understand your being so naughty." I couldn't either, so I didn't.

She said again that the way of the transgressor was hard, and I must sit in a chair while she thought how to punish me. I picked a hard chair to sit in, not a cane-seated one.

Mother said she would take my own little white-handled knife away from me, and I must eat with a big one like those I hacked. I said, "You can have my little knife for a butter-knife." I had heard her tell Teresa we would have to use it for a butter-knife, because Mrs. Clarrington had borrowed ours and not brought it back.

Sometimes when mother was annoyed I didn't know why. She was annoyed now. She took my hand and said, "We will go to the bedroom, and you must kneel down and ask God to make you a good girl."



I didn't want to go. I wanted not to so much that my legs moved in separate parts. I could feel my knees, and noticed where my feet were. I never prayed out loud, in the daytime. I knew quite a good deal about God. Usually I prayed when I was swinging, because I liked to swing. I always thought of God as having a good disposition. It seemed unnecessary to bother him about the knives, especially since it was all over and understood about, and he hadn't in the first place had anything to do with it.

While mother prayed I was so uncomfortable that if it had been any one but God I would have hated him. I almost did not like mother. I thought of a word so naughty that I did not dare say it to myself. Usually when I was naughty it was an accident, but this time I was so tired about the knives I wanted to be bad. I made a real prayer inside me, praying that God would say

what I was thinking out loud. I wanted to hear how it sounded in the bedroom where everything was still except us. He didn't.

While I said after mother the words she told me to, I thought of a way I could say what I was thinking without being naughty. I whispered, "God said something to me."

Mother had her hands on the side of the bed, ready to stand up, but she stopped and put her arms around me. "My little girl," she said, "my little, little girl!"

I was afraid she wouldn't ask, "What?" but she did, and I said, "Silly."

It was a very uncomfortable morning. I sat in my high chair without speaking until dinner-time. I thought a long time about grown people. I thought of them as if they were wrapped in thick quilts, only not quilts, that kept them from understanding how things really were.

## UNWILLING ALCHEMIST

BY MARY BRENNAN CLAPP

When you have hurt me, dear,  
Every time I swear  
I shall seal up the pain  
In my heart, and hoard it there,

To unlock stealthily  
In solitude, and weep  
To feel its bitterness  
Through pulse and spirit seep.

But always, unaware,  
You catch me with your woe,  
And I have made balm for you  
Out of the pain I know.

## ON BRIDGER HILL

BY JASON BOLLES

Stars twinkle in the valley,  
And lamps burn in the sky,  
As you may see from Bridger Hill  
Just the same as I.  
But you will better stay at home  
And slumber if you can  
And not dream of a gray-eyed girl  
Who loves another man.

There is no thing so beautiful  
As a green balsam tree  
Unless it is my love for one  
Who has no love for me.  
The forest glooms on Bridger Hill  
With lights beneath and over,  
And I would rather be a tree  
Than an unkissed lover.

If power to feel were stilled in me,  
As all my hope is dead,  
I would burst forth in greenery,  
Body and limb and head.  
And if my marching blood were mild  
And humble as my pride  
I would root, shadowy and wild,  
Upon the mountain side.

For when the gray-eyed wind of dawn  
Comes dancing up and wheedles,  
All the long pathways for her feet  
Are soft with dropping needles;  
And when the gray-eyed wind of dusk  
Goes delicately by,  
Surely a thousand troubled boughs  
Revere her with a sigh.

Now you may yawn and close the page,  
And never leave a mark.  
You have not heard a little word  
Low-spoken in the dark.  
Better to pull the blankets down,  
And fasten bolts and bars,  
Than see the lamps of heaven lit,  
The valley full of stars.

## FOUR MONTHS ON A FREIGHTER

A Story-Writer's Day Book

By JAMES STEVENS

THE lumber port of Gray's Harbor, Washington, in the winter rain.

Black sawmill stacks and drifting balloons of white wood-smoke against a lowering gray sky. Acres of stacked green lumber on five miles of docks. Black hulls towering alongside, yellow booms swinging, sling-loads rising, descending, swallowed down the gaping hatches . . . . Night, and fine lines of rain slanting across masthead lights. The headlights of a lumber-carrier flashing over the white letters WEST MAHWAH on the towering black bow of our freighter. The drag up the gangway, bundles and bags following. The first sight of the first mate, a blue-eyed Dane. Cap cocked back on a tangle of yellow hair. A hard stare. "You the passengers, hey?" A crushing handshake and a tobacco-stained grin. . . . Highballs with the captain, a white-thatched Norwegian. His first story, beginning, "Seventy-five years ago when I was a boy. . . ." Two hours of yarning, the fierce days of the clipper living again. . . . Going to sleep to the rattle of winches and with rosy imaginings about the voyage ahead. . . .

The perilous two-mile drive over the Gray's Harbor bar. A twisting channel. The lumber-burdened ship drawing twenty-six feet. Thirty feet of water in the channel. The captain on the bridge, meeting each swell with a ring of the telegraph for "Stop" so that the ship would not dip her keel into the bottom. "All clear" at last, with eight other ships left behind, their skippers less daring. A clear run ahead to the Straits of Magellan. Seven thousand

miles of deep water. Thirty-five days of voyaging. . . .

Loafing down the South Pacific. The cool breath of the Trade on us night and day. Clear sunlight by day until evening, when clouds crawled up the horizon to make gorgeous sunsets. Yarning on the captain's bridge till midnight.

Magellan's Straits. Drenched in wind-blown fog through all its desolate and dangerous Western reaches. One clear sight of the shores of Desolation Island. The rock ridges like the skeletons of titanic prehistoric animals. The williwaw charging down from the Andean glaciers, covering the decks with hail in fifteen minutes, making navigation perilous guess work. Cape Forward towering black in the morning fog. Then, miraculously sudden, the clear light of the Atlantic side. Savages dragging in fish on a far beach. A whaling station, and a whale kicking his flukes at it. Not a stir in the morning air. Penguins, porpoises and thousands of waterfowl escorting us past Punta Arenas, the most southerly town in the world. Tierra del Fuego a streak on the horizon. The glassy swells from the Atlantic. . . .

The spires and domes of Buenos Aires glowing in a morning mist. The *West Mahwah* driving over the muddy waters of the Plate until a green shore was close on the port bow. A huge brick factory building our first clear sight. A brewery. The smells imagined then! . . .

Up the South channel. Forests of masts. Schooners and barks rotting and rusting at anchor. Docked ships crowd-

ing the narrow channel. Flags of all nations, sailors of all colors. The Boca, once as notorious as the Barbary Coast. Its pavement jammed with drays and fat horses now. Black mustached drivers swaggering on high seats and bawling in the best teamster style. The tug swinging us in. Stevedores lined along the dock, waiting for work. Swarthy, medium-sized men, many unmistakably Italian. Most of them wearing pajama coats over singlets. Wide black sashes around their waists. Floppy overalls and black pants. Many purple socks. Straw slippers. No leather aprons, no gloves. "How can they work?" the mate was asked. "They don't," he said. "They just help one another." . .

The first taxi ride up the Avenida de Mayo. Beautiful Parisian buildings. Trees along the curbs, tables on the sidewalks. Swarthy, soberly-clad men reading the evening newspaper over the evening demi-tasse. The taxi a dream. A six-cylinder Buick, the driver polite, the fare thirty per cent less than the usual charge for tin-can rides at home. . . .

The evening promenade on the Calle Peru. Women and girls in quartets, trios, and pairs. Gay dark beauty unconscious-seeming under the most direct male stares. The promenade a stroll. No rush and bustle. Cares put aside. A dish of tea in a gorgeous *cafeteria* overlooking Peru. Later, the first San Martin cocktail in the Richmond Bar. Silver lights on mahogany columns and tables. Ease in a leather chair. The accordions and strings of an Argentine orchestra tickling my feet with the tango melody, "Adios, Muchachos." The taste of the free lunch between cocktail sips—potato chips, roasted peanuts, scallops and olives. Dinner in the Chicken House on Corri-

entes, where the fowls are roasted on a spit behind a wall of plate glass, in the view of all. A delectable Sauterne from the Mendoza vineyards. An hour at the Sarmiento Theatre. Ziegfeld in the Argentine. A tango singer of beauty and charm. Dancers in the Casino, a sight of the tango at home. The Buenos Aires Bar, a sailors' rendezvous. The sight of Baptist boys from American ships drinking champagne, with French and Spanish girls sitting on their laps, and bliss glowing in their misty eyes. Midnight beer at the park along the municipal baths, and a Chilean girl singing "Ai, Ai, Ai!" . . . Buenos Aires nights. Happy times. . . .

Voyaging up the Parana. Grounding in a mud-bank. A Pampero suddenly roaring over the plains, driving the waters of the Plate before it, heaving spray over the ship to a height of thirty feet, and at last rolling her off the mud.

Ten days in an Argentine village. At home with English railway men, *estancieros*, cafe-keepers, groccerymen, agricultural machinery salesmen and the movie crowds. Movie nights, with Argentine boys squealing over Tom Mix in "Broadway or Bust," and Argentine girls sighing over John Gilbert in "Twelve Miles Out," just as American boys squeal and American girls sigh. Mustachioed truck-drivers fetching tall loads of wheat to market. Hitching racks and cow ponies. The stamp of U. S. on even the old Spanish buildings.

Rosario. A boom city. The Chicago of the Argentine. The roaring life in Pinchinha, the roughhouse district of the city. Gilded Sappho and her gaudy gals. A restaurant with a sawdust floor and newspaper-covered tables. The cook slicing off the steaks before your eyes. A bubbling tenderloin topped by two



fried eggs. The sharp, true tang of Munchener. The music of accordions. The flash of knives. A police whistle. A ripped blue coatsleeve, with spreading splotches of blood fringing the gash. The bored calm of the other diners. "*No importa. . .*"

Bahia. Waterfront streets exuding devastating smells. Black longshoremen clumping in wooden shoes. Happy all the day though the pants are patched. Black gals and ladies walking with a superb lazy, gliding carriage, with baskets, boxes, tubs or bales balanced on their heads. The roaring market. A city block all covered, packed with stalls where all the small products and the foods of the Brazilian tropics are for sale. Restaurant corners, where black workingmen eat fish and beans heavily dusted with farina and drink black wine. The bluff towering above the waterfront streets, an elevator running to its heights. A cathedral—two cathedrals—a dozen—glittering cabarets and casinos and stores in dark holes. Terrific tales about the recent outbreak of bubonic plague. Smells, laughter, wooden shoes, patches, hot mists, smells—Bahia. . .

Para. Cool Amazonian weather. Rain-washed streets. A plaza in half-darkness. Working men and working girls waiting for the trams. Gay talk and laughter. Clean clothes and bright eyes. Leather shoes. Prosperity. "Henry Ford's bought twenty million acres for rubber-growing." Two hundred and forty thousand hearts beating with hope in a jungle clearing. Black stevedores again, this time dumping gigantic scoops of Brazil nuts into the holds. . . The office of the American consul. A huge barefooted, tattooed sun-blackened man facing the consul and the captain. A story of tremendous adventures told in

short, dry words. His name was Victor Vincent. He was a native of San Francisco. For twenty-five years he had prospected for diamonds in the Brazilian jungle. Long ago he had found a small stream that was a river of diamonds. Savages and the fever had driven him out. Ever since his main purpose in life was to rediscover that jungle stream. A grubstake. Then a prospecting journey alone. He had left Montevideo a year ago. Hoboed through the Argentine to the Bolivian border. Ran rum—*cana*—there for awhile. Then a disastrous, a fruitless search. Fever-smitten at one of the sources of the Amazon. A hellish journey alone down the whole length of the great stream. He wore a belt of jaguar skin. He had other skins, and the skins of anacondas, and the oil of crocodiles, and Indian trinkets. The consul quizzed him and learned that at least the story of his Amazonian journey was true. The captain signed Victor Vincent on. Two hours aboard and he was the boss of the *fo'c's'le*. A college lad in the crew dubbed him the "Tiger Man." Certainly he was half-savage. If some lady-writer meets him, we'll have another *Trader Horn*.

Out of Para with Brazil nuts. A day's steaming through muddy waters, as the Amazon floods the sea with fresh water for a hundred miles from shore. Then to Puerto Columbia. The harbor an open roadstead. The town a group of thatched hovels continuously wind-blown. Thirty-six hours to the Canal. The Stars and Stripes flying over a Y. M. C. A. building. A purchase of chewing gum from a secretary who talked through his nose and made never a gesture. Two weeks from San Pedro, but this was already Home.

## WIND

BY JOHN UPTON TERRELL

THE rain fell steadily. Two men on the seat of a freighting wagon were huddled under a heavy tarpaulin. It was early afternoon; but the curtains of water and the low gray sky made it difficult to see from one prairie hillock to another. The man who was driving held the lines loosely, and the four horses splashed through the pools in the soggy bottoms and slipped on the harder bare sides of the slopes, half-blinded by the water running from the bridle straps into their eyes. They followed no trail or track, drifting with heads down across the immense grassy plain.

Then the wind came. It drove the rain against the tarpaulin in thudding salvos. At first it came in puffs like the panting of a giant, and became gradually steadier until it blew with unhesitating fierceness.

"It'll break it up. Thank God," said the man holding the lines. The other man nodded. Water ran from his beard.

Suddenly the rain stopped, and the men could see sunshine on the distant prairie, gold and emerald. The dark blanket began to lift as the wind increased in force. Clouds were shattered, standing up in immense, ragged blue-gray columns with the sun striking their faces. Temple ruins, mountains, forests, canyons, smoking fires . . . all these the clouds resembled; and the sky between them was a clear, brilliant blue. The prairie was a green sea filled with diamonds.

The horses bent their heads lower. The men, having discarded the tarpaulin, clung to the wagon seat. Even the wagon seemed to crouch in its effort to

withstand the pressure of the great invisible force.

"God knows what this will blow up," the driver hissed between his teeth.

"M-m-uh," the other answered. His beard had dried and whipped about frivolously.

Presently they drove down into a sheltered hollow. The horses stopped of their own accord and stood with drooping heads.

"We'd better camp here," said the driver. He turned his head as if listening. Above them the wind whined in the tall grass. "'Tain't no use afightin' a wind like that. Like to blow us plumb off the earth."

"It'll quiet down towards sundown," advised the bearded man. "We can feed; and eat some ourselves. Reckon there's plenty of water along the bottom hereabouts. I'll . . . what's that?"

"Somethin' hurt."

"Listen."

"There, over in that sage." He held his rifle half-way to his shoulder. "Listen."

"Right behind that high sage. We're down wind."

"Good God, it's a man."

The bearded man jumped to the ground, and the driver stood up on the wagon, his red face grave. He watched his partner move cautiously toward the sage with rifle in readiness; heard him call out; then he jumped to the ground, dropped the tugs of the wheelers, tied the lines around a hub and followed.

The man in the sage was moving in circles, screaming loudly; but when the

two freighters had approached to within a few yards, he stopped and his screaming fell to a low moan. He was a ragged thing in human shape, a red growth on his face, eyes sunken and rolling, arms swinging ape-like, shaggy head shaking.

"Where are you headed?" called out the man with the beard.

"Who are you?" asked his partner.

The moans grew louder. The head shook faster. The arms swung in wider circles.

The two freighters moved closer. "We're travelin' to the Yellowstone," announced the bearded man. "We don't mean no harm. If you are lost or hungry or sick, come over to the wagon and we will fix you up."

"Crazy as a loon," said his partner.

They heard unintelligible sing-song words, and they saw the man in the sage begin to sway as if keeping time to the music of some strange dance. He moved toward the side of the hollow. Suddenly he stood very still, a hand to an ear, as if listening. Above them the wind moaned in the tall grass. Then with a scream he leaped into the air, ran swiftly up the slope and disappeared.

The two freighters pursued him. When they reached the top of the hollow the wind bent them. They stood looking out on the prairie reaching into infinity before them, green and gold, red and yellow. Presently they separated, setting out to circle the hollow. They met again on the opposite side.

"See anything?"

"Nary hide nor hair."

They struck off south together, walking rapidly. They turned west and circled back to the brink. They set out east and came back to their starting-

point from the north. The sun was falling into the prairie sea, an immense orange ball floating on shimmering opal waves, blinding them when they looked into it.

"Nary hide nor hair."

In the evening the driver sat by the campfire. The wind had died and the smoke from the fire rose straight toward the darkening sky. The day had ended like a song wildly sung and growing softer with each note until the last was struck, sweet and low. Dusk was sweeping into the fiery west. Stars were beginning to wheel overhead.

Presently the bearded man stepped into the red circle and said: "We ain't passed wheel track or trail for two days that I can recollect. He must have been travelin' straight east."

"Like as not," said the other man. "Mostly the wind allus blows from the west to the east in this country. He'd likely go with the wind."

"The wind is crazy," said the bearded man. "I wish we'd a found him."

"I wish I'd a shot him when he was astandin' there in the sage. I'd feel . . . well, I'm going to bed."

"I'm agoin' to play a while," the bearded man said slowly.

He reached into a nearby box and brought forth a fiddle wrapped in deer skin, uncovered it carefully, wiped the bow in the crook of his arm and began to draw it back and forth across the strings.

"My God," said his partner from his bed under the wagon, "that there hymn sounds like the wind in the slough back home in Illinois. Ye'll drive me crazy, too, if you play any more music like that."

"I wonder what he's adoin' now?" said the bearded man.



## THE DUN HORSE

BY QUEENE B. LISTER

*[Because the writer believes that a primitive-Indian English lends itself suitably to the atmosphere and simplicity of such a story as the following, and because she has heard this and many others related in a similar manner by Indians of various tribes, she has employed a patois characteristically impressionistic of many uneducated American Indians. The diction is not typical of the civilized or well-educated American Indian.]*

*This story has been whispered and re-whispered by members of several tribes—but it originated among the early Pawnees.]*

ONCE on a long time, there is a boy who live with his grandmother. The grandmother, she is very poor old woman. The boy, he is sixteen, and he is very poor also. That boy and his grandmother, they have not one relative in all the tribe. And they are a great much despised by all the other people, because they are so poor.

They not own one thing. They never have no food sometimes. And they stay off by themself in their sorrow. When the village start to move from one place to another, the poor boy and his grandmother always stay back a while and hunt greatly for things what other Indians throw away.

What the others throw in the ashes or in the pile of old buffalo-bones, they be very glad for. Sometime a little meat scrap. Sometime a piece of worn-out robe, or any old moccasin with great holes in it, they always keep with gladness for theirs. They be so poor.

One day when the tribe move from a camp, the boy and that old woman stay behind and find a old worn-out dun horse. The horse, he is the kind no other Indian ever keep. His teeth, they are very broke up. He is very sick. And he is of much more bone than meat. His legs, they are swell up with great pus. His one eye, it is very blind. And his thin back that hang

down like a bent bow, it is one great sore also. His ears hang very low down over his eyes. His mane, it is full of ashes and sticks, and scabs from his back. He make so bad a look with his one eye that the boy and his grandmother, they feel very sorry.

The grandmother, she say, "No Indian ever want such a horse's looks as this. No one bother and feed him. He be so worthless."

But the boy, he see him stand there, with his nose on the ground where he try to eat dead burr-grass, and he say, "Why not we take him? If he get more better, maybe he pretty soon carry our pack of scraps."

So they decide after they wait a while, that they lead him very slow, and that they let him carry part of their pack to try. . . . They have a long trail in front of their faces. But the horse, he limp and stop. Limp and stop—on his swell-up legs. And he keep coming and stop, but always follow.

When they reach the new village where the rest of their tribe make camp, they stop and camp also. . . . Here the other Indians point at the horse, and the boy, and the old woman with much laughter. But the boy and the grandmother, they decide they keep the dun horse very much anyway.



One day while the grandmother shell corn from empty cobs what other women throw away—all the young men of the village hurry quick from where the buffalo feed. And these hunters, they tell how a herd of buffalo now come near the feed-grounds five mile toward the sun. And they have a great excitement because they see a beautiful spotted calf with this herd. A buffalo calf with fine cloud-spots all over his body!

Now the oldest Chief of the tribe, he have a beautiful daughter. And he like her very great, but he also prize a spotted robe. A spotted robe, it is *ti-wae'uks-ti*, Big medicine. So the chief, he send out his crier thru the village. And the crier call, "Listen! The brave who bring that spotted robe to the chief can marry the chief's beautiful daughter!"

Every brave all know that the fastest horse always get his rider there first. So every brave start with quickness on his fastest horse and ride ahead of the other. And while they make hurry-plans of big talk for that spotted calf, the poor boy with the old horse, listen and believe he follow also.

At this, the other warriors turn and make great laughs. They make him very ashamed. They joke. They point to the horse and say, "See what a fine horse he have! Watch how big he catch a spotted calf!"

And the poor boy, he is so ashamed, he ride out to one side by a more far trail than the others. Here he not know what to do. He look ahead with much sadness. And then as quick as a fish can turn in the water, that old dun horse, he turn his head and speak a plan. The horse, he say, "To the side

of my bad blind eye, is a little river. Take me down there and make on me a thick blanket of mud-plaster. Make me all cover up that way with entire mud."

The boy, he is very afraid with surprise, but he obey. And then when the horse tell him to mount and sit very still, he obey also. The horse, he say thru his mud-blanket again, "Mount on my back—but do not return back with the other braves. Do not go back with the ones who say you have such a poor horse. The buffalo, they will come this way. Make me stand here with stillness until some one come close and say, 'Charge'."

Soon all the fast horses get in line. Here come the buffalo! The horses, they jump up and down and shake their heads, and keep this way so eager to charge until at last the old crier of the tribe, he speak and say, "Loo-ah," which mean "Go."

Now the warriors, they hold out their chins. They lean forward and yell to their horses to make a big leap. And their horses, they run as fast as they know. But in one suddenness, they all see the old dun horse with a big difference. The dun horse, he go faster than any bird when the wind pick it up and make it go more fast than when it fly. The old dun horse, he do not run. He fly like the arrow. He swoop past those braves' horses so quick that he get to the buffalo herd right away.

The boy, he have much big surprise, but he draw up his bow as the horse make this first charge up near the spotted calf. The arrow, it now sing in the air. And the spotted calf, he rare up and then fall in a suddenness

from this. And the boy, with another quickness, he next time kill a very fine fat cow.

Before the other riders reach this place, he skin the calf and the fat cow, and already he make a careful pack on the old dun horse. He fix the meat and the skins with the spotted calf-skin pack on the top, where it show—just as the other braves come up. And those others, they look at the old dun horse, now, and they almost not know him. He is so change. He jump. He throw up his head high. His eyes, they both good. His sore back is as smooth with wellness as the fine elk tooth. The heavy load he now carry, not bother him. He act just big-scared-like at most things he see. He so very full of great life.

As the boy lead that proud dun horse near the village, a rich young chief ride up and look at the spotted robe. The brave, he say, "I give you ten horses for that spotted robe!" The reason he do that, he want to marry the big chief's beautiful daughter. But the boy, he say, "No."

Then another rider, he prance up quick. And he also see the robe with wishes in his eyes. He call down with much kindness-like, "I give you twelve finest horses in the tribe for the spotted robe!" But the boy, he say no again. This time the boy, he laugh. And when other riders pass ahead and offer horses, and wampum, and eagle feathers, and wives, and robes, and many things, the boy, he only say, "This robe, it is *not* for trade."

The boy and his old grandmother, they live in the smallest, and most patched-up lodge in the camp. And the boy, he is very anxious to get there,

so he try to walk fast.

But before he reach home, most riders without no pack on their horse ride by and get to the village first. One rider, he hurry to the boy's grandmother and he tell her that her boy already kill the fine spotted buffalo calf. And old woman, she is very sad. She think they make a joke of her boy. The grandmother, she say, "You ought not to tell this. The boy, he so very poor. You ought not make such fun for me to be ashame of."

After while another rider, he hurry up. And he tell old woman the same thing. This time the grandmother, she is so sad because they make a joke of her poor boy, she begin to mourn. While she still wail, the boy, he lead the old horse up to the lodge where he and his grandmother and his old dun horse all live. The old woman, she look up at this. And she see the meat, and the robes, and she wonder.

"Here," say the boy, "I have much meat for you. And here I have even a whole buffalo robe for your own self! Come take this meat down!" he say proudly with command.

Old woman, she laugh at this, and she start for meat. But right quick she step back with a great astonish. The old dun horse, he stamp. He snort. He rare-up and act like a very wild buffalo. The woman, she wonder but she not dare come close by the horse! For only the boy, he can step near.

That night the boy go put some buffalo fat on the dun horse to make him shine beautiful. And now the old horse, he talk again. He tell of a great war party. He say, "To-morrow the enemy tribe all come to this village and they make a big great battle. But when

this happen, you obey what I say like this:

"You jump on me and ride right thru their very most thick line. You ride first, up to their leader-chief and touch him and count coup on him. Then you kill him. You do this, then you next ride back. You do this three times more. Until you kill the four most brave enemy. Then after those four die, you must ride a little away, and not make no more fight. If you go into charge the fifth time you get kill or I get take from you. You promise with me, this?" That horse, he is very serious. And the boy, he promise.

Next day there come the great battle. A many number of warriors on horses. They come down a hill and form the battle-line like the old dun horse already tell. And when the boy see them come, he swing on his horse and he charge at the greatest chief. The enemy warriors, they rush at this boy with all their bows and arrows. So many arrows fly now, they make the sky like a black cloud. But no arrow hit the boy. The boy, he touch the chief and kill him like the horse advise. Next he do this again. And he keep on until four of the most great chiefs are dead. Then he ride back to watch the warriors of his tribe.

These warriors, they keep on fighting the enemy-tribe until they have much weariness. They keep also on, until their horses pull back. They kick their horses so hard, that the boy at last think he can not stand it no longer. He is not hurt. He is not tired. His dun horse, he is not damage and not tired neither. His horse, he jump and snort to rush out as great as the boy want also.

The boy, he say, "Why we stay here?" And he jump with the horse and make the fifth charge. (At the fifth chief). He do this with the same bravery as before, but just when he draw his bow the enemy also send a bad arrow. And this arrow, it fly through the dun horse so straight that the horse drop dead.

Now when the enemy-tribe see this dun horse fall, they forget about the boy. They run to that horse while the boy, he run back to his own tribe. The enemy, they say, "This horse, he act so brave in the fight, he seem like a man or a great spirit. He not seem much like a horse."

They think they kill him better and for more certain. So they take their knives, and their hatchets, and their spears, and they cut the dun horse to many small bits. Because they have too much great fear to leave him in one piece.

When night come and the boy get back to his village, he feel very sad. He sorry he break the horse's word. He miss the old dun horse so great he think he go back to the battle ground where he see all the dead cut-up pieces. So he return back and he stand on the ground where the scraps lay. Here he mourn and here he think of the good horse-friend that he disobey.

"This too bad," he say again and over. Then he walk around and pick up all the little pieces of meat, and bone. And he pick up the broken bits of hoof and the hair. He put these in a pile what make him very sorry. At last he go to the top of a hill where he think of this sad pile.

Now he think maybe Ti-ra-'wa can see his sorrow. On this hill he sit with

## *The Frontier*

his robe over his head till many hours . . . His mind, it is very poor with grief as he think of the dun horse's kindness. He sit very still and mourn.

While the boy make himself into a silence here, a big storm now come over his head. And this storm, it scold him. The boy's mind it grow more poor all the time. Then the wind, it throw a rain at him. The rain, it spit at him so hard he at last lift his face. When he do this he look down where the pieces of his horse are pile up. He see that there is only a heap of flesh and bone. And he grieve again.

Now another wind, it rush at him and bring a different rain. This rain, it not spit at him. This rain, it is many griefs from many eyes. It is tears for pity this time. And the boy, he begin to look down at the pile, and he think those horse-pieces begin to take a shape.

When more time go by, a third storm come. The rain this time, it not seem like tears. It seem like cool water that wash the tears away. And as the boy look now, he see the horse's tail move from north to south, back and back.

The boy he have much fear. He think he run, but he want to stay also. When he start away a fourth storm rush down and lift the horse-shape up. The boy, he see the horse's legs move. Those front legs, they get up first. Next he see the old dun horse look with his head around, and then he see him stand up with his life.

When the boy run from the hill-top to the horse, the old horse, he begin to speak again. He say, "You see what happen before this. And you know how obedience must be from this time. Ti-ra'wa, the mystery-spirit now let me

return. But from this time you must only do what I always tell." Then the horse, he say, "Take me to a great distance from the village. Leave me behind the highest distant hill-top what you see. And leave me all night. Do not return back for me till morning."

The boy, he is very glad to obey. So he do this, and when he return for the horse in the morning, he is more glad. For he find the horse there with a beautiful black gelding whose hair is like the most black night. And whose eyes are like the biggest lightening.

That night the old dun horse, he say, "Take me to the far hill and leave me again till morning." The boy, he always ready now to obey. He do this and return back next morning. And this time the horse bring back a gelding whose hair is like the whitest snow. And whose eyes are like the hottest sun.

The old dun horse ask this promise for ten nights. And the boy, he make it by taking him to the highest hill where the horse return each morning with a beautiful very different horse. Each horse, he is finer than the other one. The dun horse, he bring the boy a white horse, a red horse, a blue horse, a black horse, a horse with beautiful spotted clouds on its body, and many mores. And the boy, he have finer horses than any horses in all his tribe.

Later, when the boy grow many moons older, he marry with the old chief's beautiful daughter. And by the time this happen he have so great a richness his people make him Chief of their tribe. But this greatness never make him forget his grandmother. That grandmother, she always live in



the lodge with him and his beautiful wife. And she is very proud of his many children.

Once when the oldest boy-child die, the old grandmother and the boy and the beautiful wife, they wrap him in the spotted robe and bury him with the robe's wishes for good luck when he reach Ti-ra'wa.

And the dun horse, he live long with much honor also. For the boy, he keep the old horse with great care. Only when he go to a feast or to a medicine dance he ride him. At other

times he lead him thru the village often. So the people they see and call back his greatness.

When the old horse die at last, the people whisper kindness about him. They sit in their lodges when a great wind and rain come, or before they plan a big battle. And they believe he asks Ti-ra'wa to keep care of them and their village. The people think the old dun horse still bring much good luck. They think he come back always to help *any* people who have a faithful kindness in their mind for him.

## THE OPEN RANGE

*Each issue will carry accounts of men's personal outdoor experiences. Only accounts of actual experiences are solicited.*

## THE CANOE WOMAN OF MONTANA

BY CORA E. VAN DEUSEN

Editor's Note: This Shoshone story is so different from the historical record that it is interesting as a suggestion of what word-of-mouth preservation means. Footnotes indicate divergence from the historical account. For these notes I am indebted to Dr. Grace Raymond Hebard.

Note by Cora Van Deusen: Among the stories that the Shoshone or Snake Indians hand down to their children is that of the brave Indian girl, Sacajawea. This is one of the stories Mrs. Minesinger told her children when on long winter evenings they sat in their little cabin on the Hellgate in the bright glow of the firelight, her nimble fingers busy with her bead work. It came to me thru Mrs. Emma Magee, her daughter, a Shoshone now living in Montana. Mrs. Minesinger was the first cousin of old Chief Tendoy of the Shoshones.

The Shoshone or Snake Indians were camped in a beautiful Wyoming valley. It was not their home, but they often roved about, camping wherever they liked and hunting and fishing as they pleased. It was early spring. Life was beginning to stir. Pretty birds were flitting about and looking for a place to build a nest. Two young Indian women, lured by the beautiful day, took their papooses<sup>1</sup> and went up on the mountain side where the snow had melted early, to look for the garlic or wild onions which would add taste to their evening meal.

One of the papooses that went with her mother that day swinging in the cradle on her back was Sacajawa. The other little papoose had no cradle board to ride in, so that,

after reaching their place on the mountain side where there was plenty of garlic, the mother spread a blanket for it to sit on.

The sun was shining. The day was bright and warm and time passed pleasantly. Soon they would have garlic enough. Sacajawea's mother heard a soft stealthy step. Turning quickly she encountered several Sioux Indians with hideous painted faces and gleaming tomahawks. She glanced at the camp below. The Sioux had surprised them: a battle was in progress. Sacajawea and her mother were taken prisoners. The other Indian woman was killed when she attempted to run to her baby on the blanket.

Sacajawea and her mother were taken as captives to the Sioux country in Dakota.

<sup>1</sup>Historically, Sacajawea when stolen was about twelve years of age. Lewis said in 1805 when Sacajawea's child was born that it was her first child.

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Here the child grew under her mother's care until she was twelve years old, when her mother, finding a chance, escaped from them and returned to her own people. She had, however, told Sacajawea to what tribe she belonged and where their country lay across the mountains. As the years passed, life grew more and more irksome among the enemies and Sacajawea longed for her own people.<sup>2</sup>

So one bright summer day when all life was singing she slipped away from the Sioux camp. She was a bright girl then about sixteen years of age and she had learned a great deal about the country that she had wandered over in company with and as a captive of the Sioux. She knew the trails and where they led. After days of hard traveling, during which she managed in some unknown manner to cross the Missouri river, her moccasins worn out, her buckskin dress in tatters, the little food that she had carried with her gone, she came upon a hut of a Mexican fur trader<sup>3</sup> and his wife near where Fort Benton now stands. Sacajawea was cautious. She did not rush up to the cabin but hovered about for three days and nights watching the trader and his wife go in and out about their duties, then she approached them seeking food and shelter.

They were friendly and kind and gave her food and also clothing, to replace her tattered buckskin garments.<sup>4</sup> They gave her a home. She stayed with them until a year had passed, learning while there to speak the English language.<sup>5</sup> She was still lonely for her people with a heartache that she could not endure, so when summer came again with its bright sunny days she set out on the second lap of her journey.

The Rocky mountains were treacherous, for they were high and covered with snow for many months of the year and few if any Indians would venture to cross the range alone.<sup>6</sup> It was an unusual and difficult thing for a girl to do. But she was very brave and very bright and not afraid of the mountains. They were grim and treacherous

with some, but not with Sacajawea. They smiled at her and welcomed her, a lonely beautiful girl. She lifted her head and read their secrets and smiled back at them and found the way over their mighty peaks.

It was a great triumph for her. A dream of years come true. It had been a long cruel journey,<sup>7</sup> but it mattered not now that she had found her people. Her heart rejoiced as she approached their camp eager for their welcome greeting. She had so longed for them, so wanted to be with those of her own blood and to live in her own country.

It had never occurred to Sacajawea that her people might not be glad to see her. But they were not. They had forgotten her; to them she did not exist. They stared coldly at her.

"You belong to the Sioux," they said. "The Sioux raised you. You are one of them. We do not want you. Go back to the Sioux."<sup>8</sup>

It was a bitter time for Sacajawea, after her perilous journey. She lingered for a while with them, but they were not kind to her and she was very unhappy. So again she started out over mountains and valleys back to the people<sup>9</sup> who had given her a home. She again stopped at the friendly fur trader's home, which was a haven to her. When spring came again she continued her journey to the Sioux camp. Once more she was coldly received.

"Why did you come back?" they asked her. "You ran away from us after we had given you a home. You cannot stay here. We do not want you. You can go back to the Snakes, if you like them so well, and stay with them. We will not have you here."

It was at this time that she became known as Sacajawea. The word means "An Outcast" and not "Bird Woman," as many people think.<sup>10</sup> She had become an outcast from both her own tribe and the tribe that had raised her.

Heartsick and weary from her long journeys, with no home to go to, she then turned to the only friendly people that she knew,

<sup>2</sup>This whole paragraph and the next one differ from the historical account.

<sup>3</sup>This Mexican fur trader does not appear in the historical account.

<sup>4</sup>There is no record of any fur trader at this time having a cabin and a wife so far up the Missouri river.

<sup>5</sup>Sacajawea could not speak English until after she had been with Lewis and Clark.

<sup>6</sup>She did not return to her own people until 1805 when with Lewis and Clark.

<sup>7</sup>There is no record of her crossing the mountains. See note 6.

<sup>8</sup>There is, of course, no record of such treatment.

<sup>9</sup>No record of this in the Lewis and Clark Journal.

<sup>10</sup>It is a pure Shoshone word meaning "boat pusher" or "boat puller."

the Mexican fur trader and his wife.<sup>11</sup> Their welcome was warm and friendly. They bade her stay, and gave her food and clothing. Here she lived for several years.

Charbonneau, the arrow packer, came one day with a load of furs. He dallied long in dealing with the fur trader, made much small talk, and looked often at Sacajawea. She was slender and pretty and had soft bewitching dark eyes and Charbonneau fell in love with her. He came often after that, and by and by married her and took her to his lodge.

Not long after that two great explorers, Lewis and Clark, came, who were sent out by the President of the United States to explore the western country and find their way to the Pacific coast.

With their company of men, they had come many many miles up the Missouri river and into Montana.<sup>12</sup>

## ANDY GITCHEL BORROWS A HORSE

BY WILLIAM S. LEWIS

FOLKS didn't bother much with the law in early days; it was a long ways to the nearest county seat. Certain general rules of conduct were established, a violation of which meant banishment, sometimes a rope around the neck thrown over the cross-arm of a corral post or the limb of a nearby tree and, in such cases, the offender, often riddled with bullets, was left as a demonstration to those who newly entered the community that they must likewise conform or suffer a like judgment.

One thing that always made a frontiersman unusually peevish was to steal his saddle horse. Horse thieves were becoming a nuisance in western Montana in the summer of 1881. The *Weekly Missoulian* began to recommend "hemp stretching" on a considerable scale, and numerous necktie parties were held during the fall. A crowd of us young fellows were working at that time at Vicksville on the construction of the Northern Pacific railroad. We had an acquaintance, a good-natured, easy-going cuss named Andy Gitchel. Like most of the crowd he gambled or threw away his money as fast

When Lewis and Clark asked the Indians for a guide they searched in vain among their number for a warrior who knew both the country and the English language. The warriors knew neither. Among them all there was only one who had crossed the treacherous mountains and who also knew the English language.<sup>12</sup> This one was Sacajawea, wife of Charbonneau, the arrow packer. Sacajawea gladly consented to go. She had by her marriage become a member of the Bannack tribe<sup>13</sup>; and it was only after a long Indian council that they gave their consent.

Accompanied by her husband and little papoose, which rode in a cradle board on her back, she led the expedition across the mountains and into the Columbia river valley. When she reached her people this time<sup>14</sup> she came not as an outcast but as a conqueror, and as such they welcomed her.

as he got it. One day he told us that he was going to leave us and go on to Missoula. We asked him how he was going to go.

"Oh," he said, "there's lots of good horses around here. I'll just borrow one and ride it into Missoula and then turn it loose.

"That won't do, Andy. They are hanging cattle and horse thieves around here now."

"Oh," he replies, "that's all right. I don't aim to keep the horse. I just want to ride him."

That night Andy Gitchel took a horse that was handy and started off for Missoula. The next morning some men came into our camp and said, "If you want to see your friend, Gitchel, you'll find him hanging beside the road about six miles from town."

## NEWSPAPER REPORT—1881

From *The Missoulian*, Missoula, Montana Territory, July 22, 1881, under the column headed "Territorial Brevities": The *Madisonian* fears there is an organized gang of horse-thieves operating in that country, and suggests hemp-stretching as a remedy.

<sup>11</sup>No such record in Lewis and Clark.

<sup>12</sup>Historically, wanting an interpreter, they took Charbonneau, near Bismark, North Dakota. Sacajawea, as his wife, accompanied him. She did not then know English.

<sup>13</sup>Charbonneau was, of course, a white man.

<sup>14</sup>Sacajawea met her people near the state line between Montana and Idaho.



## HISTORICAL SECTION

*Each issue will carry some authentic account, diary or journal or reminiscence, preferably of early days in this region of the country.*

### "THE BATTLE OF THE BIG HOLE"

As described by local contemporaries from hitherto unpublished letters and other documents in the Montana State Historical Library. Edited by Paul C. Phillips, University of Montana.

#### FOREWORD

The letters and other documents describing the Battle of the Big Hole now in the Montana State Historical Library at Helena are here used through the courtesy of David Hilger, librarian. These papers throw a light on the battle quite different from that shown in the military reports which have been the chief source of information.

Chief Joseph of the Nez Perce Indians started with his band from the Clearwater in Idaho in July, 1877, on a flight across Montana to Canada. United States troops were trying to force him onto a reservation and it was to escape them that he undertook this long retreat. The skill and daring with which he conducted his followers and thwarted the efforts of some of the best generals of the United States Army have long held the interest of students of Indian warfare.

The Nez Perce Indians roamed at will over the country between the Bitter Root mountains and the Cascades until 1855, when General Isaac I. Stevens induced them to agree to go on a reservation of large area. A few years later gold was discovered on this reservation and miners crowded in. The United States government sought to remove the Nez Percés from the mining region and many agreed to a new treaty. Chiefs Joseph, White Bird, Looking Glass and others refused to accept the new proposals and continued to roam at will over Idaho. General O. O. Howard was instructed to round up the Indians and in May, 1877, held some conferences with them. His pacific efforts were futile and soon there was war. Chief Joseph defeated the white soldiers at White Bird canyon and in the Clearwater offered desperate resistance to a large force under General Howard and escaped. He then began his march eastward along the Lolo trail, described by General Sherman as "one of the worst trails for man and beast on this continent." He planned to cross the Bitter Root mountains into Montana and then go on to Canada. General Howard was slow in following and troops in Montana were hurriedly despatched to stop the invaders. Captain C. C. Rawn of Fort Missoula went up Lolo canyon and built a fort in a narrow place to resist the Nez Percés. Chief Joseph led his band along the ridge above and Rawn's fort has since been known as Fort Fizzle. Colonel Gibbon arrived with a small force and with citizen volunteers started in pursuit of Chief Joseph, who was going up the Bitter Root valley. He overtook him in the Big Hole valley across the divide, where after a serious engagement the Nez Percés again escaped. They dodged back and forth across Montana and stole the pack train of General Howard, who was pursuing them. They crossed the newly created Yellowstone Park and traveled north towards Canada. Near the Bear Paw mountains they thought they were across the line and stopped. Here General Nelson A. Miles surprised them and compelled their surrender.

<sup>1</sup>General Miles was commander of the Yellowstone district. He was at that time engaged in war with the Sioux.

General Sherman characterized the flight of Chief Joseph as "one of the most extraordinary Indian wars of which there is any record. The Indians throughout displayed a courage and skill that elicited universal praise."

#### 1. Gen. Nelson A. Miles' to Gov. B. F. Potts of Montana.

Cantonment at Tongue River  
March 16th, 1877



Gov. B. F. Potts

Your very welcome letter of Jan'y 17th 1877 was duly received and I thank you for the appointment enclosed, also for your kind expressions of interest in the enterprise in which we are engaged. At present I think

the prospects are quite favorable, and the complete subjugation of all the hostile Indians in this region is only a question of time, and one of the best means of making such a peace permanent is just treatment toward the Indians and the opening of the country to white settlement.

I trust that we may have the pleasure of a visit from you this Summer; you will find much of interest in this part of Montana, and although a large percentage of the land seems rough and unsuitable for cultivation



yet there are resources here adequate to the support of a numerous population.

**2. Chauncey Barbour, editor of the Weekly Missoulian, to Gov. Potts.**

Missoula, M. T., June 29, 1877

I left Deer Lodge in company with Captain Mills<sup>2</sup> and reached here today noon. I ascertained upon undoubted evidence that at least three Nez Perces Indians had come from Camas Prairie into Bitter Root valley since the fight<sup>3</sup> and that two had been upon the reservation coming by way of the Mullan road; that Michelle, chief of the Pen d'Oreilles and Arlee, chief of the fragmentary band of Flatheads upon the reservation, had expressed their belief that the young men of both tribes would join in the hostilities as soon as the Nez Perces should reach the Bitter Root valley. It was the intention of Capt. Higgins<sup>4</sup> and myself to visit Charlos<sup>5</sup> tomorrow in Bitter Root valley and learn his intentions in this emergency; but upon information that we deemed authentic Charlos had not been seen in that valley for some time and his whereabouts was not known. There are a great many rumors floating in the air, many of which are born of terrified imaginations; but it is certain that our Indians are fully advised of all that is transpiring across the Coeur d'Alene mountains, and we are completely in the dark about their intentions. It is reported that the entire population of Bitter Root valley is fortified at Fort Owen<sup>6</sup>, and many of the families round about Missoula have removed to town. The noble fellows who live in the mines in the lower end of Deer Lodge county have notified us of their readiness to respond to any call we may make

upon them for our defense. We rely on you to stand our friend as you have in times past, and do as you are able to ward off any threatened danger. Walla Walla, the nearest telegraphic Station, is 140 miles from the scene of the recent massacre, and the Indians might be upon us before we could be advised that they were moving eastward. Capt. Rawn<sup>7</sup> would station pickets upon the trails leading from the Nez Perces country; but he has no horses or any of the requirements for such service. While we are not assured of the disposition of our resident Indians we have ever present in our minds the terrors of an unseen danger from an invasion of the Nez Perces. Our exposed situation and proximity to the recent massacre, and our not knowing what hour we may be exposed to a similar visitation are of themselves sufficient to strike terror to the entire population. I have not yet heard from Gen. Gibbon<sup>8</sup>. He may have better information which may preclude the necessity of guarding passes and preventing the passing of emissaries or hostile bands to this region. Capt. Mills will undoubtedly furnish you with fuller details of the exact situation here. I will endeavor to give you accurate information of the state of things from time to time. We have much that is purely sensational. The position of jeopardy in which we find ourselves is itself sensational. We cannot lull people into security of staying at home to be massacred, and it is not an agreeable task to unnecessarily excite the fears of men, women and children.

P. S. A military organization was effected here to-day. Will send up papers next mail. B.

<sup>2</sup>Captain J. H. Mills, editor of the New Northwest of Deer Lodge, Montana. Governor Potts appointed him Adjutant General of the Montana Militia to resist the Nez Perces.

<sup>3</sup>The fight was the battle of White Bird Canyon of June 17.

<sup>4</sup>Captain C. P. Higgins had come west with General Stevens's surveying expedition in 1853. He served in the army until 1860 when he resigned to become a merchant of Walla Walla. He soon went to Hell Gate west of the present Missoula and entered into a partnership with Francis P. Worden. In 1865 he located the townsite of Missoula. He was one of the founders and president of the Missoula National Bank. He lived here until his death in 1889.

<sup>5</sup>Charlos or Charlot was the principal chief of the Flatheads or Selish Indians. In 1872 James A. Garfield had urged the chiefs of this tribe to move onto the reservation south of Flathead Lake, Charlot had refused and remained with his followers in the Bitter Root Valley. Arlee agreed to go and his band received all the government annuities.

<sup>6</sup>Fort Owen was an old trading post established on the site of the first St. Mary's Mission by "Major" John Owen in 1850.

<sup>7</sup>Captain Rawn of the United States Army was then building Fort Missoula, near the town of the same name.

<sup>8</sup>Colonel John Gibbon was at Fort Shaw on the Sun River north of Helena.

3. Joaquin Abascal<sup>9</sup> to an unidentified friend.

Beartown, July the 2

Friend Willy

On my return from Flint Creek I found your two letters Send the watch to me here and the price with it Nothing in the office belonging to the U S Will be up the 8th of this month

[P. S.] Indians playing Hell on the Blackfoot—allso the are Cleaning of the Trayl from Nevada Creek to Sun River it looks suspicious, in Ireka the [illegible] held a meeting yesterday to organize a self protection it looks gloomy

4. J. H. Mills to Gov. Potts.

Deer Lodge, Montana, July 5, 1877

Your favor to hand—I have written Logan to hold all guns in case until receipts are officially signed, and have written both Higgins and Drouillard<sup>10</sup> in relation to ammunition. I think it would be well to have full instructions to Sheriffs., also blanks, printed to cover these issues. I don't think the Sheriffs are anxious to tackle the arms on their official bonds, and if they dont it will relieve you of much importunity—I published law that all might understand when application should be made. I get numerous letters every day in relation to the matter and it is breaking me for Stationery and Stamps to answer everybody, which, being a "servant" now I have to do with best grace possible—Wrote Drouillard, no arms had been sent here except for them, and that there was no transportation now to be had from Helena—Have heard nothing more about Flatheads—Think they are in same place—Am glad Sherman is coming out. I eliminated largely on that letter, so as not to trench on any personal matters or private expressions—

I notice by Capt. Higgins letter the excitement still continues at Frenchtown—From half thos people down there being half-breeds and running with Indians all the time they ought to know whether the Indians referred to mean devilment or not—It will take some time for them to arrange a programme if they are going to ally with Joseph—

Will try and find out movements of Flat-heads from French Gulch—Am satisfied though that they dont mean harm—Their leaving the Bitter Root however is evidence that they believe the Nez Perces are coming over—This is a matttr I did not care to refer to in paper—

5. J. H. Mills to Gov. Potts.

Deer Lodge, July 8th 1877

Yours of Friday received. Enclosed extra is sent to night all over West Side. Arranged with McAndrews<sup>11</sup> to let 40 of the guns go to Missoula tomorrow—and have sent receipts to Drouillard through Higgins for the same—A letter from Higgins 6th says the following is the issue of arms in that Co

		Men enrolled	Guns Issued
Co A	Missoula	64	50
Co B	Stevensville	38	30
Co C	West Side BR	32	20
Co D	Corvallis	35	20
Co E	Skalkaho	37	20
Co F	Frenchtown	34	20
		240	160

Capt H. has taken receipts from Co Commanders and says Drouillard Sheriff will sign receipts in due time. Co E. Skalkaho, is building a stockade of logs, at a good place and will be supported—Pickets will be kept at the upper pass—which De Lacy<sup>12</sup> says is impracticable. It is practicable in season—He has instructed Co officers about drill and care of ammunition; they are buying their own ammunition for practice—

I think we should issue 120 guns here anyhow and hold at least 80 to serve volunteers at once in case they are called—I regret Butte cannot have about 50 guns—not that they need them for defense, but there are some good fighting men there who would mount and follow and they need cultivating—But half the Co will come here if there is danger, and this will be the first and only point appealed to for aid. I think 50 good men would volunteer from here and immediate vicinity to support any assailed point. Many think 100, but that is too high. However all volunteers could and would

<sup>9</sup>Joaquin Abascal was the leading merchant of Beartown, at that time, an important mining camp.  
<sup>10</sup>M. M. Drouillard was sheriff of Missoula County.  
<sup>11</sup>James McAndrews was sheriff of Deer Lodge County.  
<sup>12</sup>W. W. DeLacy, an engineer who built a considerable part of the Mullan road.

rally here for an outfit and so I trust we can hold at least 80 guns here. I would not favor an organization here until an outbreak occurred and then issue to those who would go fighting.

Some dozen or 15 Indians were at Warm Springs store yesterday trading or trying to trade. They wanted provisions and ammunition although their belts were full—I think you should re-issue by authority that order prohibiting sale of ammunition to any Indian or half breed—These Indians say they were Nez Perces, but I am satisfied they are Flatheads. They came off Big Hole via French Gulch and drove a band of 75 or 80 head of horses up Warm Spring Creek in direction of Cable—Warm Springs settlers organized and sent for guns. McAndrews let them have 20. They will picket the French Gulch and Cable trails to protect their horses. Bitter Root and Flint Creek are pretty well over the *scare* part of it, but I think will remain vigilant while matters are critical in Idaho—Your views about issue of arms to Indians and half breeds are correct—

My bond is returned to me here today with following "Memo" by Solicitor of Treasury

"A Scroll is not sufficient seal for Gov't official: they should be of wax or wafer—All the Territorial Secretaries are not not charged by law with the disbursement of appropriations—the Secretary of Montana, amongst others, *is*—and by Sec 1940 R. S. must account to the Secretary of the Treasury and be governed *solely by his instructions* as to disbursements—This bond is only security for the faithful performance of the usual and ordinary duties of a Secretary of the Treasury—In cases where a Secretary is *also* disbursing officer there ought to be added to the Condition of the bond that he will faithfully disburse &c according to law and the Instructions of the Secretary of the Treasury."

The Assistant Secretary in returned bond says "Please cause the Correction, as indicated in the Memo furnished by solicitor, to be made at your earliest Convenience etc." So that lets me out for another month, I presume—The bond was made in strict accordance with the form sent by you. I will attend to it tomorrow.

I do not believe, as things look, it would be wise for you to get away from the telegraph line, more than a few hours travel.

Send Weston down to pick out that ranch. I think we will have our hands full yet this month. Lets get things in as good shape as possible and, if they come for Montana in numbers we can handle, whip hell out of the red-skins. Will keep you posted.

[P. S.] What do you think of the Crows I believe they are bad eggs and are not to be relied on—

#### 6. Extracts from Letters received Thursday evening [July 13] [presumably by Gov. Potts].

[a] From W. B. Harlan, Stevensville—Good man—

July 10. "Poker Joe changed horses at the Nez Perces Camp near Corvallis and lit out for the camp on the Big Hole. Did not tell his mission. He was seen 20 miles above Corvallis, horse on the run. Since the settlers have been supplied with arms they have confidence they can defend themselves and their homes if given a little notice of invasion. The families with one or two exceptions are at their homes. There was not the panic that was reported. Four or five families went to Missoula, and 19 or 20 to Fort Owen, while fully 50 staid at their homes somewhat uneasy but not apprehending immediate trouble. Charlos is at his ranch, has been there all the time, and says he will not fight the whites, but it will be hard to restrain some of his young men if there is any more shooting into lodges as there was recently done at Missoula by parties overloaded with ammunition and whiskey. (Don't believe that is true; think it was some rowdys firing off the howitzer spoken of in Missoulian.) The Flatheads have not driven their horses out of the valley but are herding them back close to the mountains, probably as a precaution against a raid of the Nez Perces."

[b] From James Thompson, Under Sheriff Missoula 10th.

"Two cases of guns came tonight. Will send them to Frenchtown. As soon as they are opened and examined will receipt for them. There is a manifest feeling of uneasiness among our citizens not before exhibited. A general opinion seems to prevail that will have more or less trouble before it ends."



[c] From Capt J. W. Reilly (My Cousin) Chief of Ordnance Mil. Div. of the Mo. Chicago 3d)

"General Sheridan is now in from section, crossing the Big Horn Mountains from Green River to the Yellowstone. He told me he did not anticipate trouble in your Territory or in this Division. Miles would stir up all the Indians in the North West if he were let alone, but Sheridan ordered him to give up roaming and go to the Post and build it."

**7. C. P. Higgins, president of the Missoula National Bank, to J. H. Mills.**

Missoula, July 12th 1877

Yours of the 8th inst recd. 2 cases guns & 1 Box ammunition reached here same evening (10th) Can't get the sheriff to sign the receipts, he seems to shirk the responsibility. I hold the officers receipts for guns &c issued to Cos requiring them to take a bond with security from each member of the C. in the name of the sheriff of Missoula County or his successor in office. I enclose form of bond had them printed at my own expense. was anxious that everything should be done according to law as required by the Gov and yourself. Thanks for Telegrams. nothing new here.

**8 J. H. Mills to Gov. Potts.**

Deer Lodge, Montana July 12 1877

Your favor of the 11th covering order appointing me Adjutant General of the M M is to hand. Thank you. It would be a trifle of a joke if it were published now but occasion may arise when there will be necessity for it and work to do—I had to scold a bit today about the shape in which the Territories are in cases of the kind now threatening us. If you were given discretionary authority it might save trouble with telegraph lines down and no authority to act and incur a dollar of expense in fighting for the United States—If you call for Militia you will have to feed them, and help them a good deal in outfitting and who the deuce is going to pay for it? And then without such authority you would not feel like handling the number of men necessary for good work—It seems to me your standing with the President and Sherman would procure your request favorable consideration. McAndrews dont like to take the responsibility

of issuing those arms and being held on his bond for them—that is what is the matter—There are five times as many guns asked for as he can supply and if he gives one locality and refuses another it might interfere with a re-election—So he looks at the law with a view to having you designate the camps to be supplied, and that thus furnishing them under your order, if the Company bondsmen should fail and the guns not be forthcoming he would not be held on his bond for the losst—This accounts for his reluctance. I think you had better order 40 stand to Phillipsburg, 40 to New Chicago Company, and 20 to Bear Mouth, send the form of bond required from Companies, if it is your duty to go into these details and order that the secretary shall determine their acceptance and I will see they are good bonds—I think however this matter devolves wholly upon the Sheriff, and if such is the case make him procure the proper bonds. The County will pay for the 100 by Express The 40 sent to Missoula was deducted from our bill here and charged right through from Helena. I hope you will find transportation for the 100 reserve guns for this place—There is just a possibility that they will be needed and we dare not trust against that possibility—We have had good time to prepare and time is slipping around without our taking advantage of it. How many guns have you and where are they? Would you order the sale of any to isolated families down the Canyon and other places, and at what price and where delivered? I can't think what the mission of Poker Joe is! He is not running away from the fight—I am inclined to think he is drumming up disaffected Indians. He travels too fast to be on a pleasure trip. A lot of squaws arrived here today but no bucks—not one—

**9. J. H. Mills to Gov. Potts.**

Deer Lodge, Montana, July 13 1877

I wish you would inform me on following points: Should the militia be sworn in subject to your call for service anywhere in the Territory—If so send form of oath and muster roll, and designate who shall be mustering officers!

What amount shall the bonds be placed at



—the value of the guns ,double value, or what—

Is the Sheriff to determine the sufficiency of bonds? I would like to have full instruction on these points—Have submitted my authority to Sheriff and he wishes to issue on your order, or mine, to avoid the responsibility attached to giving preferences when so many more guns are needed or asked for than can be supplied. If it is now possible I wish to see good guns issued as follows, subject to demand of Sheriff or governor when the exigency is deemed to be past, viz.

Bear, Bear Mouth and Ireka, 1 Co .....	30
New Chicago and Emmetsburg, 1 Co .....	30
Phillipsburg and Cable, 1 Co .....	40
Helmville, Jefferson and Nevada Creek, 1 Co .....	30
Upper D [eer] L [odge] Valley (new is- sue) .....	20
Reserves for Deer Lodge .....	100

Total .....250

French and German [gulches] want guns, but if trouble occurs these people will have to get out—The other localities ask about twice as many as allotted to them, but can reconcile them to this apportionment — Blackfoot should be content with muzzle loaders or rely upon guns from Helena—the 100 here would allow 50 to Butte in case they would send that many men to the field if circumstances required, or they might have 25 for drill as you think best—If this number of arms are available it would put a good line of fire along an entire exposed border and under the bonds they can be reclaimed at any time. With this disposition we can make a good showing in any quarter and support any place imperilled—New Chicago has had a man here four days waiting for guns—Have 40 guns here for issue when you approve the allotment and they give satisfactory bonds and muster roll. Nothing new—

#### 10. C. P. Higgins to J. H. Mills.

Special Messenger Cumminger arrived here today noon. Immediately notified the people of the valley, generally, and the officers of the militia companies in particular. Splendid chance to strike the Hostiles by way of the Lo Lo pass with 4 or 500 well

armed men. We have Indian reports to the effect that the Hostiles are in force on this side of clearwater and on the spokane. Have advised the Cos above to scout the passes leading into the valley. a picket guard will be sent up the Lo Lo by Co "A" Militia, and Capt Raun we will furnish him 4 horses to mount his men for that duty tomorrow. The Frenchtown Co "E" will scout the passes below. will advise you promptly of the approach of any Hostile force Hope the Gov. will get authority to Rais the force asked. I paid Cumminger the price charged \$40.00 for bringing down the message.

#### 11. Chauncey Barbour to Gov. Potts.

Missoula, M. T., July 15, 1877

Your letter to Capt Mills and the news to which it called attention was dispatched from Deer Lodge after the mail arrived last night; arriving here at 11 a. m. today. I got out an Extra, counseling the people to the course that seemed to me best. Capt Rawn has promised to post scouts on the Lo Lo trail, and we held a meeting tonight and arranged to furnish him with horses and accouterments. There will be no leaving homes or unnecessary scares if we can avoid it. The mass of our people have a settled conviction that we cannot pass the summer without a collision with the Indians. The story of Poker Joe is confirmed by later reports (especially to us who have a better knowledge of the country and these Indians) all except the number of whites killed, about which Indians always seem to take a license in exaggerating. This statement about the number of Indians who are taking part in this conflict is being confirmed daily. Of course they do not engage as tribes; but there are restless young men from all tribes, lured by the prospect of plunder, who are operating with the Nez Perces. I have reliable information that some Flatheads passed over into the Nez Perces country this spring. I see in late dispatches that the Calispells are among the hostiles on the Spokane. Calispell is the Indian name for Pen d'Oreille. There are some of our people who are trying to persuade themselves that the Flatheads and Pen d'Oreilles will not war on the whites—that the Catholic religion has the effect of making an Indian

lamb like. There are some who affect to believe that Charlos will not lie. The great and good Geo Washington did lie, he did his best to deceive the enemy, and it is too violent an assumption to think that Charlos is better than he. It is a fact—one that commends itself as reasonable to the dullest comprehension—that an Indian rejoices at another Indian's success. It is alleged that our Indians were jubilant over Custer's defeat last summer. It is a part of human nature that this should be so. The white race is not without a similar feeling, and we are wanting in discernment that belongs to intelligent beings if we do not recognize the fact that all Indians sympathise with the Nez Perces, and especially those Indians that have fraternized with them for generations, and are connected with them by ties of marriage. We ought to have a sufficient force here to prevent all communication between the hostiles and our Indians. We cannot too fully express to you our gratitude for the interest you are taking and have ever taken in our welfare. For some reason Gen Gibbon has not brought to our knowledge any efforts that he has made for the security of this people. He may be persuaded that we are in no danger; but we do not know that he has taken pains to inform himself of the facts. We do believe that the Government has instituted the military arm that our lives may not be in jeopardy and that the accumulations of years may not be liable to be swept away in a moment, and that if we volunteer in defense of our neighbors' homes that our time shall not be wholly lost to us. This war is growing daily, and it is becoming manifest that the whole Nez Perces tribe, except perhaps those bands controlled by Lawyer's sons, and very many renegades from surrounding tribes are in for the war. And I am prepared to say that the men who declare that no part of the Flat-heads or Pen d'Oreilles will join in the war offer an insult to common intelligence. Your recommendations for increased protection at this juncture are prompted by sagacity, an intelligent estimate of Indian character, and by a knowledge of the situation here which you have taken the pains to study as the basis of your action. You thank me for kind

mention of the interest you have taken in our affairs. Through long and weary years we have sought recognition from the government of our exposed situation. You have stood our friend, and the present crisis is a testimonial to your sagacity and the correctness of your judgment in long ago recommending the protection that all now concede to be necessary. The reflection must be gratifying to you; the assistance you have rendered imposes on us a debt of gratitude we cannot repay with mere words.

## 12. Chauncey Barbour to J. H. Mills.

Missoula, M. T., July 15, 1877

Dear Sir. Your courier got here about 11 a. m. today. I was at the synagogue, but we managed to get off this Extra by one. Capt Rawn was seen and promised to send a sergeant and four men to scout the Lo Lo trail. We held a meeting tonight and made provision to mount the Scout. We think here that Poker Joe's story has been confirmed in many important particulars. To be sure the number of white killed was exaggerated, but that is a universal Indian failing. There was fighting on the 3d, 4th, and 5th. Jo was in it 2 days. The Indians were set afoot and their camp destroyed. Jo got here on the 6th, 2 days from the fight—he must have left the morning of the 5th. And besides in confirmation of Joe's story we are finding that more Indians are on the war path than was at first supposed. We have news from Indian sources today that the Nez Perces are in force on Clearwater; also, that the Indians are on the war path on Spokane river. The evidence accumulates that this is no holiday foray by an insignificant band of Indians. We believe this so firmly that we intend to relax no vigilance to preserve human life. The Indians may destroy crops and drive off stocks. The panic has disappeared, and there is naught here but a settled purpose to make it as warm as possible for any Indians who are wanting a game with us.

## 13. J. H. Mills to Gov. Potts.

Deer Lodge, Montana, July 17, 1877

McLean got back without you, much to my regret as I was in hopes you would come over. The parties here after guns are reconciled to the method of issue—public senti-

ment here strongly endorsing your ideas and moulding the crude ideas of those who on coming in are rather more vigorous than well matured in their ideas—That statement in the Independent of 1200 breechloaders and 1200 muzzle loaders, which you were supposed to be anxious to get rid of is what raised the muss. I have furnished Philipsburg and Bear with muster rolls and will send the former 40 and the latter 40 guns on compliance with requirements. I think I had better hold and store in your name the guns not issued. There is a little error as to the number issued by the county. You sent Missoula forty of the guns marked against us—The Receipts from this Co will be all right—Logan is under obligation to get receipts from Sheriff of Beaverhead or return the arms. The enclosed letters from Missoula will show the cause of delays there—Sheriff Drouillard is like Sh. McAndrews—would like to avoid the responsibility. I will get a copy of bond from Sheriff here and send to Capt Higgins and tell him his *sheriff must* sign receipt to you—When I was there it was not known who had to issue these under the law and I exacted from Higgins his word of honor that whatever receipts were required by you he would see and hold himself responsible should be made—This he freely promised. They have evidently covered the issue with bonds but have misunderstood the method—I dont want to issue any more of the guns than I can avoid, as I believe prudence suggests a strong reserve.

Our folks here would pay transportation on 100 guns, muzzle loaders, from Virginia, and would like to have an order for that many and the conditions upon which they can be had and distributed. The Ch man of Co. Comis asks me to write you for an order for that amount—Upon what conditions does Butte get the 100 for which Warren<sup>13</sup> had order—If you order any muzzle loaders for this side please include a couple boxes of ammunition for Fisks Howitzer—He has only a dozen charges—canister—

[P. S.] I omitted a requirement about muster rolls in the slips I sent you. Have incorporated it in enclosed which I furnish to those desiring to organize.

<sup>13</sup>Charles Warren had been appointed Adjutant by Governor Potts.

#### 14. J. H. Mills to Gov. Potts.

Deer Lodge, M. T., July 22, 1877

Philipsburg today filed Muster Roll as required by General Order No. 2, and I ordered the 40 guns and 1000 rounds of ammunition in your name—

I hand you herewith receipts from Sheriff of the Co for 100 stand of arms and 2000 rounds of ammunition—I had to issue him 40 guns of the 180 sent to make up his complement of 100, you having transferred 40 of his first 100 to Missoula County, together with 1000 rounds of amunition. I still hold 140 guns and 6000 rounds of amunition, which I will turn over to sheriff only as he needs them, taking receipts therefor. Mc-Masters wrote from Bear last night to send them guns but as they did not send required credentials I cannot forward them—I kept a team hooked up Friday afternoon and had 100 guns ready to send down the road but would not let them go without orders from you—If they would once get the guns down there I dont believe they would organize as required and I dont propose to go up for \$200—Although they made me promise in Missoula to keep them promptly advised and agreed to bear the expenses. My second cousin came back this morning with a bill against me of \$44.25 which I have to pay—unless this time makes it up to me—That lets me out—If Howards dispatch wasn't worth \$40 to them. I dont know what would be—Anyhow I dont propose to pay expenses any longer, being out more now than any other person in Montana.

It is a monstrous outrage that the Nez Perces shall be allowed to pass through our territory—They should be fought from their first appearance until they are wiped out. No matter if they do "only want to be let alone"—The people of Idaho are our people and their butchers would be ours if circumstances were favorable—I think anyhow, these advance squads are only playing "good Indian until the fighting force gets in—They are dammed "good" when they have the worst of it. If Missoula County was unprepared for them they would have been *in it* from the word go—

If it were detetermined to strike them we could whip them out of their skins as they



go through Montana—If they take the Big Blackfoot and Cadottas pass wild(?) we can strike through Bear and Yreka or on Ohvanda Creek, while Gibbon comes through Cadottes pass and thus get them front and flank—If they try Big Hole we have equally good chances to strike them—They are encumbered with camp and families, are strung out and travel slow. I have marked Philipsburg Co B, because Warren said you promised Butte the "A" Co—I have record of Muster Roll here: have this one filed for reference—Thompson signed agreement but says he will see you to have it modified—Isn't it hot?

[P. S.] De: Let you think Capt Raun should have ordered these Nez Perces disarmed as fast as they come in?

Fisk kept pardon to copy and has not yet brought it down.

#### 15. J. H. Mills to Gov. Potts.

Deer Lodge, M. T., July 26, 1877 10:20 a. m.

Governor. Messenger arrived at 10.30 last night and one at 10 this morning. Telegraphed Gibbons in full, but line is down between Helena and Fort Shaw and have just had Dittes forward it by Courier with Rauns dispatch. Will send you an Extra Coach with 40 guns and 3000 rounds of ammunition as soon as it can be hooked up. Have telegraphed Dittes to buy ten thousand Col 50 centre fire Cartridges and forward them here with all the guns he can obtain, instantly. Capt Brinner [?] with 30 men from somewhere reached Helena this morning—Have had all dispatches shown him—Have sent two different messengers to Butte, and notified them of guns here—Sent 40 guns and 1200 Cartridges to Bear, Elk and Yreka by fast wagon this a. m. Knowles, Neplin and Robinson are organizing a company here now. I designated Larabee and Kelley to procure them transportation—I think 20 or 25 men will leave here this afternoon, and that Butte will respond by midnight.

Ordered Capt. McLean with his Philipsburg Company to move to Bitter Root immediately either by direct route or Bear Mouth and report to you for duty. If they move by Bear Mouth they are picked the

direct trail and report fact—I am hampered for lack of means to mount men, but in the absence of formal proclamation am doing the best I can—I believe there will be one hundred men from this County en route tonight—perhaps more—Will request Bear to furnish men. Guns will reach there this evening—Am not sure I did right in buying ammunition but will trust it—Will telegraph McDowell.

#### 16. J. H. Mills to Gov. Potts.

Deer Lodge, July 29, 7 a. m.

Messenger arrived at 4 a. m. to day with dispatch dated 4 p. m. 28th. I telegraphed immediately to Dittes to send courier to Gibbon as he had requested: also telegraphed to McDowell<sup>14</sup> the situation—Over 150 men have arrived here from Butte, regularly organized—They have a good many private guns. I issued Co A (Capt W A Clark<sup>15</sup>) 35 breech loaders, and to Co B (Butte Volunteers, Capt Owen) eight breech loaders—the last one. This includes 16 received from Helena in the night and eleven returned by Capt Evans of Warm Springs Co—It is the last breech loaders obtainable in Montana—Butte brought down the 100 guns there, for which I have substituted 100 guns from Virginia. They should arrive there to day—Will now endeavor to arm and send men to the front with muzzle loaders—Many men are here anxious to go who will not go forward with muzzle loaders but I think many others will—Could send 300 more men if I had arms—Both Companies are now mustering on the street and will be off in an hour. Every private gun I know of has been given up and gone forward—I never saw anything like it—this county is fairly frenzied in the desire to get to Missoula with guns—If you have held the hostiles till this time they can never get through with a man left alive—I will send 20 muzzle loaders to Philipsburg first team I can press—I was terribly crippled yesterday by failing to get proclamation and everything was done on public spirit—Cannot find out yet just how many men will leave in the two Butte Companies—They are splendid men—Think Helena will respond now—They have been disposed to

<sup>14</sup>Probably Major-General McDowell, Commander of the division of the Pacific, United States Army.

<sup>15</sup>Captain W. A. Clark, later millionaire senator from Montana.



look at this all as a joke—but this mornings news will change the feeling—The only trouble is to get guns. Browning was at New Chicago at 12 last night but called his Company up when Courier arrived and will press on—He had passed too far for me to get horses to him—Half of Deer Lodge is locked up and all gone to Missoula—Connie Miller is anxious to be off and get to Missoula—Rest assured that every man is going who can get a gun and will be with you as fast as horses can go—

**17. J. H. Mills to (?) Gov. Potts.**

Deer Lodge, July 28

The Inspector General on McDowell's staff acknowledges receipt of my dispatch of 27th advising him of the situation and urging that Howard follow hostiles on Lo Lo. Says McDowell has transmitted information to Howard and requested him to do all he possibly could under the circumstances—Have mislaid dispatch—

**18. C. P. Higgins to Gov. Potts.**

Missoula, M. T., July 31st, 1877

Your courier arrived here at 7½ pm—In the absence of the Sheriff I handed your letter to Mr. Thompson under sheriff for action in the matter of collecting and forwarding guns and ammunition to Deer Lodge as you direct—The Hostiles are encamped 28 miles south of Missoula on the west side of Bitter Root River near Stevensville—I am not advised as to which route they propose to take out of the valley—if you want mounted men from Missoula you authorize their organization before they leave here—I am authorized to say to you that you can have 200 men mounted and equipped for service (but save us from mobs)—Missoula Co put 150 men in the field to assist the U S troops stationed here under Capt C C Rawn to punish hostile Indians from Idaho—If the Indians were not punished who is to blame?

You were here and should know—The people of this county did not have the direction of affairs in the field—The Territory should do something to punish these Indians and we are willing and ready to do our part—We will cheerfully pay your courier's expenses while here.

As to the failure of Missoula to subsist the

Deer Lodge men I have only to say that they were unorganized except the Deer Lodge Co and they as soon as they moved were furnished with subsistence the wagon accompanying them with every thing they asked for—I am personally out of pocket over 200\$ since this excitement—

[P. S.] The Indians are taking ammunition from citizens whom they meet and although so far as we know have done no damage are very independent and are moving very slowly in fact have not moved at all since reaching their present camping ground—

**19. Chauncey Barbour to Gov. Potts.**

Missoula, M. T., 31st, 1877

Since writing to you Governor I have talked with our people and they are confident that your demand was based on the presumption that all the Indians had left us that you would never have made the request if you had known how we were situated. The Indians are not only at Stevensville but there is strong probability that they will return this way as soon as they learn that they are to be headed off on Big Hole. Joseph's move is probably a feint. I beg of you to consider this matter favorably for our people. I know they will surrender guns without a whimper as soon as all danger is removed.

**20. Chouncey Barbour to Gov. Potts.**

Missoula, M. T., July 31, 1877

The Bitter Root mail carrier brings word that about 75 bucks were raiding Stevensville to-day. They have gone through some houses and helped themselves to what they wanted. They are probably lawless stragglers, as there were no squaws with them or head men which is an evidence that the main force is on the move. I hear from Indian sources that they intend to go down the Big Hole by Twin Bridges. I am glad you are going to give them a game. There is the best place to strike them. You don't want any military, or any one to hold your men chafing and tell them to "wait," "wait" until the hostiles are gone. Take command yourself, and don't let good men be humiliated by imbeciles or cowards. These Nez Perces wanted to make their peace with the government, but they now have a big brave

on. They camped on an open place with their women and children, exposed themselves to slaughter, and they either thought we were cowards or else they wanted us to oppose them with force so that they might surrender. If you find them hiding away their women and children in some secure place and meeting you defiantly you will know that they are earnestly on the war path. Wipe out the disgrace that has been put upon us, and never let any regular officer again command Montana Militia.

[P. S.] Will do what I can toward gathering up guns. I know it will be hard work especially in Bitter Root. Those from Missoula and Frenchtown ought to be had readily. The sheriff has power over the Frenchtown guns, and if you make a requisition on him he will attend to it. He is a conceited ass, and if he considers his mightiness ignored is a mule. I don't think you can depend on any volunteers from here. Joseph is fully informed of all movements. He is the best general living. He is liable to come this way in less than a week. If we get any news of importance we will notify you by courier.

#### 21. Col. John Gibbon to Gov. Potts.

Headqrs. Dist. of Montana. Fort Shaw, M. T.

July 27, 1877

I leave here tomorrow with troops for Missoula, via, Cadotts Pass, with the expectation of meeting any of the hostile Nez-Perces who may attempt to make their way eastward through the mountains.

My force will not be large and should the main body of the hostiles attempt to come up the Cadotts Pass trail, I might be unable to do more than check them; In such an event early intelligence of their movements would be of great importance, I therefore request if any important information reaches you, You will send it to me if possible by special courier to Lincoln Gulch to be sent after me in case I have passed there.

I have written Captain Rawn that in case the hostiles should come up the Blackfoot he will follow them with all the force he can gather, and the services of any of the armed militia he might be able to get to accompany him would be valuable.

#### 22. Copy of letter from Col. Gibbon to J. H. Mills.

Ft. Shaw, July 27, 1877

I start tomorrow via Cadotte's Pass. Send word to Gov. Potts to give all the aid he can to help Captain Rawn, to hold the pass till I get there—If the Indians succeed in getting through, they should be followed as closely as possible. I will come rapidly. I shall be without news after leaving here. If you get any, send me a special courier through to Lincoln. If the Indians get past Missoula and start up the Blackfoot trail, any force you can bring from Deer Lodge across to Lincoln may be of material assistance to us.

#### 23. Copy of letter from Captain Rawn to J. H. Mills.

"August 1st, 1877

"Please inform Gov. Potts that Indians will be some six days, may be less, in getting to Big Hole Prairie, at present rate of moving. Both Gen'ls Howard and Gibbon desire them delayed, Gen. Gibbon instructing me today to temporize with them for that purpose. I will start tomorrow up the valley with my 50 or 60 men, and endeavor to follow out his wishes until Gens. Howard and Gibbon can get in. In the meanwhile, the bearer, who is well acquainted with the country, states that if the Gov. sends from Deer Lodge, by way of French Gulch, several days will be gained and Indians headed before reaching Big Hole Prairie, and also meet volunteers from Bannack. Gen. Gibbon instructs me to take such volunteers as will go with me—will take 12 days rations with me."

#### 24. Col. Gibbon to Gov. Potts.

Post near Missoula, M. T., Aug. 2d, 1877

As soon as I can get my command here, probably day after tomorrow, I propose to move up the Bitterroot after the Nez Perces & fight them if they will stand. It is all important that the passes behind them leading into the Big Hole basin be occupied at once, and as I learn from Capt. Rawn that you are moving some companies of militia in that direction I have to request that you will give instructions to have such passes occupied as soon as possible. Please give instructions also to have no negotiations

whatever with the Indians, and the men should have no hesitancy in shooting down any armed Indian they meet not known to belong to one of the peaceful tribes.

I shall be glad to receive any information of importance which you can send me.

**25. Chauncey Barbour to Gov. Potts.**

Missoula, M. T., August 3d, 1877

Dear Sir, Was glad to receive your kind and friendly letter. I felt myself in the most trying position in the last issue of my paper, I ever was in in my life. There was so much of unreason and of reckless statement and vituperation that I felt it my duty to stand against the current if it swamped me. And it is gratifying to me today to say that I have compelled a sober, second thought, and that scores of good men have taken me by the hand and thanked me for what they are pleased to term the able manner in which I have performed an intelligent duty. You, who have ever stood our fast friend, did not escape in the general detraction, and I thought it best justice to you to call attention to the important service you had rendered us in the crisis through which we passed. If you had taken command of the militia and precipitated hostilities you would have merited our unmixed condemnation. It is best as it was, and our people now with one accord congratulate themselves that our welfare was in the hands of discreet men. There were some reckless spirits among us and from Deer Lodge county, who had nothing to lose, who would have precipitated a fight even at the expense of seeing this county ravaged. They could conveniently place themselves in a place of safety if required; but those with their wives and little ones and all they had in the world would have to stay and suffer. I am thankful that my publication day was not last Sunday: I was then prepared to call Capt Rawn a coward and incompetent to command a force of men, but careful inquiry of all men who were at the front convinced me that such charges were unjust. In regard to the future, I wish to say this: Gen Sherman in his letter to you said he

wished to visit Missoula, where there seemed to be a need of military protection. For years we have been anticipating the troubles that are now upon us, and yourself and Maj Maginnis have been the only officials who have foreseen these troubles. We wish, if possible, that Gen. Sherman, yourself and Maj Maginnes will visit us. We wish to show him that there are 52,000 Indians between the Rocky Mountains and the Cascades; that all routes in that region lead through Missoula; that there is no military force in that region between Shaw and Walla Walla; and that a respectable force of cavalry here can be rapidly thrown into any part of that region. We can show him that there is as much cause to apprehend an uprising of our own Indians as there was of the Nez Perces two months ago. All we ask of him is to come by all means and satisfy himself.

I have given you no Indian news. A half breed who arrived last night reports the hostiles 50 miles above here on the east side of Bitter Root. They propose to go to Camas prairie some 10 miles above to stay a few days, recruit their horses and dig camas. Charlos is anxious to fight them. His disinterested friendship for the whites is simply a desire to steal Nez Perces horses, of which they have some good ones. He might do us a good service if he could set them afoot. Gen Gibbon arrived Thursday 4 p. m. The infantry are expected today. The whole force, nearly 150 men, will move on them Saturday, and try and hold them until Howard gets up. The Indians will mock them. If anything further transpires before the mail closes I will insert it.

[P. S.] Aug. 5. Gen Gibbon who arrived Thursday afternoon started after the hostiles Saturday at 1 p. m. He had nearly 200 men of whom nearly 20 were cavalry. The Indians are reported at Rosse's Hole, 90 miles from here, at head of Bitter Root. Gibbon won't catch them. It is believed by those who know the country that they will go up Red Rock and thence by Henry's Lake. No news from Howard, although a courier started to meet him Friday morning. I kept open my letter for late news until I missed the mail of the 4th.



26. Washington McCormick<sup>16</sup> to Gov. Potts.

Missoula, Aug. 3, 1877

Your note of the 1st inst is at hand but came too late to reply by return mail. Genl Gibbon accompanied by Lieut Jacobs with a detachment of Mounted Infantry reached here at 4 p. m. last evening. The ballance of his command reached here about 6 o'clock this evening. Courriers have been sent up the Lo Lo to Howard to ascertain his whereabouts. I do not think he will be able to reach the Bitter before the 8th inst. On account of the difficulty to be encountered in passing over the trail with his ordnance, stores trains etc etc. But whenever he gets here he that late or early he will not be in time to accomplish anything unless the Indians finding themselves closely pressed by Gibbon and forces, should repeat the tactics so successfully practised by them upon Capt Rawn and the volunteers, cross the Bitter Root River near Camas Prairie where they are now encamped get in his rear and pass down the valley on the east side of the Bitter Root. Cross the Hell Gate at or near Missoula and go up the Big Blackfoot River. Should this be their programme then Howard might be here in time to give them battle. It is Genl Gibbons intention I believe to move early in the morning and endeavor by hard marching to overtake them in two days. He proposes to load the Infantry into mule wagons and reach their camp if possible before they leave the Bitter Root and give them battle whenever he overtakes them. I doubt the expediency of attacking them with the force under his command, as the Indians undoubtedly have a fighting force of at least two hundred men and in all the essentials that go to make up a good fighting force they are equal to them except in the one item of ammunition. Their men are disciplined their horses are trained, and they are commanded by a man who thoroughly understands his business. There is no longer any doubt but that Joseph with his entire fighting force is here. The Indians have plenty of Gold dust Coin and greenbacks and have been paying exhorbitant prices for flour Coffee sugar and tobacco.

<sup>16</sup>Washington J. McCormick came to Montana in 1863 and to Missoula in 1868. He was prominent as a lawyer and business man.

They told the merchants at Stevensville on Wednesday that they had money to pay for what supplies they wanted and if they did not sell to them they would take them by force. So far as I am advised they have killed no stock and molested no one except to disarm two or three citizens, returning their guns however but keeping their ammunition. The people of the Bitter Root with their families are still in their fortifications and propose to remain there until the danger is past. The situation is a most deplorable one their wheat crops are ready for the machine, and no one to harvest them while in many instances stock have broken into their fields and ruined their crops. Unless the crises is reached within the next ten days and the Indians driven out of the country, there will not only be immense losses in grain but absolute suffering for the want of the necessaries of life. It is most opportune that Genl Sherman is enroute, and that he will be on the ground to take in the situation as it presents itself at this moment. The people are thoroughly convinced that Capt Rawn acted wisely in not attacking the Indians.

27. From an extra edition of The New Northwest, Aug. 3, 1877.

## THE SITUATION ON THURSDAY

Deer Lodge, M. T., Aug. 2, 1877

The circumstances of the past week have prevented a regular issue of the *New Northwest* this day.

The situation of Indian affairs as known todate is this: The Idaho Indians who arrived under Looking Glass and (it is stated,) White Bird, are not exceeding 200 warriors strong. They were camped about Stevensville and Corvallis until Tuesday evening, and had so far not molested the Bitter Root settlers, protesting friendship for them.

Under the call for 300 volunteers by the Governor's Proclamation, three Butte companies, 150 or 160 strong, remained in camp until Thursday morning. A company of 30 or 40 men were in readiness to move in an hour from Deer Lodge. Phillipsburg, Cable, New Chicago, Bear, Bear Mouth, Yreka, Pioneer and Yamhill had fully 75 men ready for instant service, and tenders of companies

of 50 men each were telegraphed from Helena and Pony on condition of being armed. The request of Governor Potts, Delegate Maginnis and Judge Knowles to the War Department for authority to organize and move this force to co-operate with the U. S. troops was, however, answered adversely, as per the following:

"Washington, D. C., Aug. 1, 1877.

"Governor Potts:—Your dispatch to the Secretary of War has been received by him and submitted to the President. He directs me to say as Lieut.-Gen. Sheridan is in charge of all military matters in Montana his opinion has been asked on your call for volunteers. He may have other troops in his division to answer the purpose.

E. D. Townsend, Adjutant-General."

"Washington, Aug. 2.

"Hon. B. F. Potts, Governor of Montana:

"Receipt of your dispatch of July 31st was acknowledged by the Adjutant-General. I have new reports from Gen. Sheridan which indicate that it will not be necessary for the Governor to call out 300 volunteers to intercept the Indians, as Generals Sheridan and Terry will make proper disposition of troops under their command for the purpose.

"Geo. W. McCrary, Secretary of War."

The Governor had no authority to bind the Territory for expenses, even of subsistence, for every man almost had his own horse, or a borrowed one. Supplies could not be obtained except by cash. In hearty sympathy with Governor Potts to head off and suppress these Indians, the citizens of Deer Lodge on Wednesday afternoon raised \$1750 in cash for the purchase of supplies, and at a meeting that evening committees were appointed to communicate with other towns to secure additional money, to get organizations perfected, and to have them either rendezvous with the Butte Battalion or respond instantly to a call. It was known, however, the Bitter Root people were opposed to having a war precipitated in that Valley with these Indians, and their exit therefrom or the opening of hostilities must be awaited. The fighting force of the Indians had also contracted from four hundred to less than two hundred, and it is known an ample force to destroy them can be con-

centrated almost anywhere in this county in 24 hours.

Governor Potts and Major Clark therefore visited the command on Thursday morning and a council of officers was held, when it was agreed upon that the Butte Battalion return to Butte and reorganize, every man in the command having a horse and a breech-loading gun offering to respond to any call of the Governor instantly, and he assuring them their services would be needed and recognized if any hostile demonstrations were made after the exit of the Indians from the Bitter Root or the United States should call for volunteers. Other circumstances also seemed to require this. The command was thereupon marched to Butte. We have no opportunity here and now to enter into details or award the credit due to the hundreds of noble men who have been under arms and rode day and night during the past week to meet these public enemies, but this Butte Battalion, which was in the field since last Saturday night, and ready for any service at any instant, demands recognition even here. And we will say this now, proposing to more fully recognize their patriotism hereafter, that with some opportunity to observe and know the response to the Missoula call for "Help", we never saw half the enthusiastic patriotism and selfsacrifice evidenced, even during the most exciting war times, as was shown in Deer Lodge county when that call came. We believe 400 Deer Lodge county men were on the road to Missoula in two hours after they received that grand hailing sign of distress. It is unfortunate in many respects, as it turned out, that it was made, and in others it is well. Deer Lodge may need to rally yet, and its people have shown how nobly they will respond. On Thursday after the Butte Battalion was marching homeward, a courier arrived from Missoula, bearing letters from Howard saying he was en route on the Lo Lo. The courier was five days on the trail and saw no Indians. Howard is supposed to be not far behind, and Wheaton is crossing the Coeur d'Alene with another force. Capt. Browning has reached Missoula with 30 men from Fort Ellis. General Gibbon with 100 men will reach Missoula to-day. Capt. Rawn proposed

to march his command up Bitter Root valley after the Indians.

There were 150 Indians, supposed to be Bannacks, with 200 head of American horses on the overland stage road near Red Rock yesterday. All the people had left except the stage employes.

Thos. Watson, of Bannack, writes the *Independent*, July 29th of a confirmed report that the Indians, supposed to be Bannacks, had killed six men on Wood river. Scouts from Bannack who met the Deer Lodge scouts at the head of Big Hole yesterday also told them the same story.

It is uncertain yet which route the Nez Perces will pass out of the Bitter Root. They may go out and strike down the Big Hole, or toward Bannack or Salmon City. They may come across the Burnt Fork to Rock creek or Flint creek, or even just above Missoula, and go out via the Big Blackfoot. They may commit depredations or pass through peaceably, or they may turn and attack the soldiers against whom they avow war. The concentration of U. S. forces near Missoula indicates they will move soon. Their numbers indicate they can be met and whipped on any route they undertake to pass through this country, but there seems an indisposition in exposed localities to first open the fight on them.

It is therefore the desire of the Governor that every man mounted and armed and all organizations of militia on the West Side, hold themselves in constant readiness to go to any point where they may make hostile demonstrations, or to the support of the U. S. troops in case they require it, and that organizations be perfected as rapidly as possible.

Again prepared to furnish promptly the news by extras, we will keep our people advised of any important movement at the earliest moment. It is well to be vigilant. Instant service may be required.

#### 28. C. P. Higgins to Gov. Potts.

Missoula, M. T., Aug. 4, 1877

Hostiles moved out of the valley Thursday and will probably reach Ross's Hole this evening. Genl Gibbon started at 1 p. m. with his command about 200 men in wagons, and mounted. Of course the Indians can keep

out of his reach. Your plan of putting a force of say 300 volunteers in the field to oppose the Indians was the best in the absence of a regular force. No late news of Genl Howard.

#### 29. From The New Northwest, Friday, Aug. 17, 1877.

Fight on the Big Hole. The First Accounts of the Battle

Deer Lodge, 9 a. m., August 11.

W. H. Edwards has just arrived from Big Hole bringing accounts of a terrible battle between Gibbon's command and the Nez Perces on the Big Hole River, August 9th.

Gibbon's command consisting of 182 men—17 officers, 133 infantry, and 32 cavalry—crossed over from Ross' Hole to near Big Hole on Wednesday. Starting at 11 o'clock the same night they moved down the troops—except a few left with the gun and transportation six miles above—close to the Indian camp which was made on the Big Hole about three miles below where the Bitter Root and Bannack trail crosses. At daylight in the morning the fight opened, by the volunteers firing on and killing an Indian going after horses. The charge was then made on the camp and hard fighting occurred for the next two hours, during which time large numbers of men and Indians were killed.

The soldiers then charged on the lodges but were repulsed in the attempt. The Indians then attempted to cut them off from a high wooded point but the soldiers charged and driving the Indian advance from it held it, and at once fortified. The fighting continued here all day, and was still progressing fitfully when the courier left at 11 p. m.

The fighting was desperate on both sides, the full force of Indians being in the fight. Captain Logan and Lt. Bradley were killed. Gen. Gibbon, Capt. Williams, and Lieuts. Coolidge, English, and Woodruff wounded—Gen. Gibbon only slightly. Bradley was the first man killed. Messenger says after they failed to capture the lodges the Indians moved their camp off in the direction of Bannack. All horses being captured, the messenger had to come to French Gulch—nearly 60 miles on foot. Another messenger



was also sent to Howard who should reach them today.

The howitzer had been left six miles back and ordered to move up at daylight. During the fight they heard it discharged twice and then it was silent. A band of Indians soon after appeared with a large band of horses, and it is believed all the horses of the command, the gun, their supplies, reserve ammunition, etc., were captured. Gibbon thought when the courier left there he still had 100 effective men and believed the Indians had nearly all withdrawn from his front. The messenger says he thinks 100 Indians were killed, that nearly half the command, including citizens, were killed or wounded.

General Gibbon has sent for medicines, surgeons, supplies, etc. Dr. Mitchell will leave today with escort.

General Gibbon particularly asks for ambulance wagons, to come under escort, and every available wagon will go forward from here and Butte.

It is one of the hardest Indian fights on record and Gibbon's command made a most gallant and desperate fight against overwhelming numbers.

The messenger only recollects certainly of personal notice the following casualties among the citizens and officers:

Al Lockwood, Corvallis, killed.

Myram Lockwood, Corvallis, mortally wounded.

David Morrill, Corvallis, killed.

— Harts, Corvallis, killed.

Lin Elliott, Corvallis, killed.

— Mitchell, Corvallis, killed.

Otto Leifer, Corvallis, shot in foot.

Thirteen of the volunteers, and probably eight or ten regulars, were left back with the wagons and gun. It is feared they were surrounded and killed. General Gibbon had given up hopes of them. With them were Joseph Blodgett and Anthony Chaffin. Newton Chaffin and the two Sherills were in the fight and unhurt. Wm. Ryan of Skalkaho was wounded slightly in groin.

There was no water on the wooded point where the command had fortified, but Gibbon had sent down a fatigue party with can-

teens, under cover of a firing party, and got water in the evening.

General Gibbon was the only one who went in mounted. His horse was killed early, but he received a flesh wound in the leg after reaching the hill. Capt. Williams was slightly wounded on the temple early in the fight, but he was still on duty.

When the troops reached the bar overlooking the Indian camp their fires were still burning, but they had no picket out. The command was formed and every second man was sent down into the bottom where they formed along a piece of brush with Ruby Creek between them and the hostiles. When the first Indian was shot he was not over fifty yards away. The command then charged through the brush, for the camp, but found the copse full of Indians. Here at the crossing of the creek, the most desperate fighting was done, the fighting being muzzle to breast. Lieut. Bradley, despite entreaties, was leading his men, an Indian shot him from a bunch of willows, and he fell, the first man, dead. A dozen balls went through the Indian in an instant, and the two lay dead within reach of each other. The fighting at the stream was desperate and dead bodies of Indians and whites fell and floated down together. Mr. Edwards says men or officers never fought better in the world and that Gibbon is as brave as a lion.

12 m.—Surgeons, ambulances, light wagons, medical aid, supplies, and escort are going forward from Deer Lodge, Butte, and Helena. Drs. Reese and Steele are enroute from Helena. Helena has raised \$2,000 to pay expenses. The ambulance train will organize under escort and leave French Gulch tomorrow morning.

Deer Lodge, August 12, 4 p. m.

Sergeant Wilson, Co. 1, 7th Infantry, has just arrived with despatches from General Gibbon. He left the camp on the North Fork of Big Hole at 5 p. m. on the 11th and his statements agree in the main with those of Mr. Edwards.

The fight opened at daylight on the 9th, the Indians having a force of over 300 warriors. The camp consisted of 89 lodges.

The number of soldiers and citizens killed

## The Frontier

is 2; wounded 32; missing 2. The Indians captured the gun before it reached the command, dismounting it and carrying every piece off of it they could.

The supplies were not captured as reported, but the Indians succeeded in getting between 2500 and 3000 rounds of ammunition.

The Indians have about 300 head of horses. They broke camp on the morning of the 11th and were about 15 miles from Gibbon's command at that time. Sergeant Wilson says there were at least 75 Indians killed.

Howard's cavalry was to arrive at Gibbon's camp on the evening of the 12th, 300 strong, and the command would start at once in pursuit of the hostiles.

Capt. Sherwood's (Sherman's escort) company will be near French Gulch tonight, and the Butte Battalion will be on Big Hole.

Sergeant Wilson reports meeting the Deer Lodge Company near French Gulch this morning.

The two missing soldiers are reported at Wunderlichs'.

Big Hole, August 11, 1877

Terry, Comm'dg Dept: St. Paul, Minnesota

My loss in the battle of the 9th was 7 officers and 53 men killed and wounded. I am satisfied the Indians suffered much more, for the surprise was complete and many were killed in their tepees or running out. Forty Indians were counted in about half the battle field. Howard has just arrived and I believe he can catch them again. As soon as he arrives and I can get the services of a doctor, I propose to move to Deer Lodge and take most of our wounded to Shaw. They are all doing well, but I fear Lieut. English is mortally wounded.

(Signed) Gibbon, General Com.

### 30. Col. S. D. Sturgis to Gov. Potts.

Head Qrs. 7th Cavalry

Camp on Yellow Stone River

(Near Mouth of the Still-Water)

Augt. 23d, 1877

On marching from Tongue-River, I sent Lieut. Fuller of my Regt. rapidly forward to Fort-Ellis, with instructions to put himself in telegraphic communication with you for the purpose of gaining all the information possible in regard to the movements of

the hostile Nez-Perces. My objective point was then the Judith Gap, as it was believed that the Nez-Perces would endeavor to reach the Judith Basin, where they had been in the habit of hunting Buffalo. On reaching the Mussel-Shell-River (about sixty miles north of this place) a courier reached me from Lieut. Fuller, with accounts of Genl. Gibbon's fight and information to the effect that the Nez-Perces were retreating either in the direction of Snake-River or of Wind-River—it being uncertain which. In either case I was, of course, too far out of the way to join in their pursuit; but believing that, in case they should enter the Wind-River country, they might yet try to make their way into the Judith-Basin, and knowing that the only practicable route for this purpose would be by Clarks Fort E or by the Still-Water, I determined at once to march my command (six companies of my Regt. and one piece of Artillery) to this point; where we arrived today, and from which I can observe both rivers and intercept the hostiles in case they come by either. Should you have information of the movements of the hostile Indians which you might consider of importance to my command, under these circumstances, I would respectfully request that you forward it to me as early as practicable.

### 31. Peter Ronan, Indian agent, to Gov. Potts.

Flathead Agency, M. T., July 14th 1878

I have to report the following council held with Michel, head-chief of the Pend d'Oreille, Sunday, July 14th, for your information and any action you may suggest:

Having narrated to Chief Michel the particulars of the murders committed by a band of Nez Perces who came from the North, by way of the North fork of Sun river, murdering as they came along two men at the Dearborn in Lewis and Clarke Co.; two men at Deep Creek, Bear Gulch Deer Lodge Co, and four or five miners at the head of Rock Creek in Missoula County, all of which murders were committed in the direct Nez Perce trail from the North to Idaho Territory, known as the Elk City trail, the chief said,

"A few days ago a messenger came to me from Sitting Bull's camp with word from that chief that if I valued the lives and

welfare of my people, to gather them together and leave the reservation. If I did not feel like joining him and making war upon the whites—that, after he had done his work among the settlers, myself and people could come back again and occupy our lands without fear of obtrusion."

Agent—"What reply did you send back?"

Michel—"I told the runner to tell his Chief that the Pen d'Oreills were friends of the whites—that years ago, when I was young, the Pen d'Oreills and the Sioux had met in battle and were enemies. We are now quietly settled down, supporting our families by raising stock and planting crops; our homes we love; our lands are bountiful, the crops are ripening and we will soon be gathering them in. We are not well armed and have nearly forgotten the modes of war—but a mouse, though small, if trodden upon, will turn and bite. Tell your chief if he comes we will give him battle and die by our homes. This is my answer."

Agent—"What do you think of the murders just committed?"

Michel—"I think that perhaps White Bird, the Nez Perce chief, whose voice is for war, has arranged with Sitting Bull, and has sent out small murdering parties to come through Montana to the Lapwai reserve in Idaho to murder as they go through this country and commit all sorts of crimes in Idaho and incite the reservation Nez Perces to war, with a promise that Sitting Bull, with his warriors, will come and help them. This is only

my opinion. Perhaps this band of murderers has broken away from White Bird without his consent."

Agent—"Do you not think it best, in order to be prepared, to send scouts on the two trails leading from the North through this reservation?"

Michel—"It is the only way to protect the country. Indians can scout the trails north of here and can give you and me information in time to head them off."

Agent—"Will you send out scouts?"

Michel—"Yes if they can have arms, ammunition, Blankets and provisions and some hope of reward."

Agent—"Providing I can get these things will you be willing to have whitemen go with them?"

Michel—"Yes, provided you choose the white men and half-breeds, and that the scouts will be under your and my own control and report to you, when you can easily report to the soldiers when signs are seen. Three lodges of my people are camped on the trail leading in by the Jocko; I will send them word to lookout for Nez Perces and bring in news of what route they take—these people are fishing at the lakes and are not well armed; they cannot fight but can give us news. If regular scouts go they should be armed because they cannot otherwise protect themselves if they get into a fight, which they would be apt to do as the Nez Perces do not feel friendly because we would not join their cause last summer."

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## BOOK SHELF

*Reviewed by the Editor.*

**Frontiers: The Genius of American Nationality.** Archer Butler Hulbert. Little, Brown & Co. 1929. \$3.00.

One of the pleasant features of this book, which states and restates belief in the motive power of faith and in the leavening power of sentiment, is Dr. Hulbert's recognition of the fact that history is not only record of great doings but also recognition of the significance of a people's daily living. History is national, concerning the humdrum motivation of a people's life. Hence the author's belief in the necessity for preserving, and cultivating, individuality in persons and provincialism in sections of our country. The writer's mood is partly expressed in his conviction that in looking critically at life one does at least as well to give the *best* interpretation as to give the *worst*—God's in his heaven, *something's* right in the world, and in America, much. He therefore carries more than an apology for "business efficiency", rotarianism, the churches, "flaming youth", and all that our most fiery critics reduce to ashes in the heat of their invective.

The most valuable features of the book are to me portrayals of those unremembered acts in our past which historians have either omitted or forgotten, and which we today are forgetting: the national, almost vital significance of the building of the B. and O. railroad, for example, and of the Erie Canal: the determination of the men of the Revolutionary war when peace had been established to win the west; and, even more, the faith, the idealism, the patriotism in the daily life of the pioneers, all the way from the Atlantic seaboard in 1620 to the Pacific in 1840 and back to the Rocky mountains in the 1860's. Since the writer believes wholeheartedly in the necessity of frontiers to progressive living, he insists on recognizing today's frontiers in scientific investigation, in aerial navigation, for example, and in social thot and practice.

The book is exactly what its "jacket" asserts, one man's, an exceptionally able historian's, "description of American temper and ideals" and iteration and reiteration of his belief in their sanity and virtue.

Dr. Hulbert has made great contributions to American history, especially western history, in recognition of which he has been made a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society of Great Britain, and this last summer he was awarded the L. H. D. degree by his alma mater, Middlebury College, Vermont.

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**The Hunting of the Buffalo.** E. Douglas Branch. Appleton. 1929. \$3.00.

Mr. Branch has a greater gift for discovering facts than he has for narrating them; nevertheless, this book carries any reader's interest along who wants to know something about the buffalo, where they roamed, how they were hunted, by white man and red, and how they came to be exterminated as wild animals on the ranges and became the showpieces of parks and bison reservations. There is a background of western history and of Indian life; and the book is plentifully, and often amusingly, illustrated. The narration is more interesting and graphic in the later pages.

**The Road to Oregon.** W. J. Ghent. Longmans, Green & Co. \$5.00.

Mr. Ghent has written a reliable and readable book, finely illustrated and well printed and furnished, as all historical books should be, with a map. The author has not only consulted the known documents but has talked with librarians, historians, and old-timers. He does not tell a new story, but he does tell, with needed emendations, an old story so freshly that the general reading public will obtain from the book not only real information but entertainment. The narration is not dramatic, much less melodramatic, but it is straightforward and intelligent. The book deserves wide reading.

**Sand.** Will James. Scribners. 1929. \$2.50.

This is not so good a book as *Smoky*, largely because Mr. James knows the mind and spirit of horses better than he knows the mind and spirit of men, and this book, unlike *Smoky*, has a man for its hero. But it is, like all of Mr. James' books, reliable account of western life, in this instance of how a wealthy social wastrel, stranded on the great cattle plains, becomes interested in the wide open life—wholesomely wide open as his earlier life had been unwholesomely—and determines to make a man of himself by learning the cowboy technic and spirit, capturing a black stallion, the object of many an old cowboy's futile chase, and "Miss Rita," likewise the object, etc. The book will interest old, middleaged and young—I read it aloud to a nine-year-old, and that child is now demanding more James books from the city librarian. And of course it has the well known James illustrations. Nobody knows the horse and the open country better. And nobody can be more relied on for accuracy.

**John Jacob Astor.** Arthur D. Howden Smith. Lippincott. 1929. \$3.50.

This is a life of a significant American figure by an expert biographer. Astor rose from peddling in New York to be that city's "landlord"; his early career was romantic, and his later life miserly and pathetic. Astor

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figured in the history of the West and the Pacific Coast, as the town of Astoria testifies. Mr. Smith, without burdening his reader with the mass of details that must have made up Astor's life from day to day, with a knowing hand garners the romance so that the first two of the six sections read like fiction and yet retain the tang of reality; in the next section he has revealed the shrewd, unsympathetic merchant and closer of mortgages; in the fourth he has almost forgotten his subject, the man Astor, in tracing with appreciation of the telling details the struggles of the fur companies in the West, and yet portrays Astor dominating the background; and in the last two books he shows the methods of the real estator becoming New York's landlord, and then, wifeless and with his children gone, the old, feeble Astor, still grasping, but now pathetic, accompanied everywhere by his attendant. Here are three hundred pages of entertaining and enlightening reading.

**5 Poets.** Edith Mirick, Benjamin Musser, Jewell Miller, Isobel Stone, Norman Macleod, Harrison. 1929. \$2.25.

This is a book of poems for poets: its popular appeal will be slight. But all who wish to keep abreast of contemporary experiment in poetic idea should own and read the book. The gathering of five so diverse spirits of similar tendency into one volume results in high entertainment. The palm for fullness of accompanishment goes to Miss Miller, whose idea and emotion are sure of themselves, and whose rhythm is finely adequate. Mr. Musser is the most successful "rebel", because of his outspokenness, his irony, his satire, his wit, and because of his unchecked facility. His writing is the most uneven, perhaps. Miss Stone is not too successfully engaged in endeavoring to exploit passion in the contemporary fashion; her rhythms are ragged, altho an occasional poem, like "Night Mood", succeeds finely. Miss Mirick has originality of idea and quick emotion; her verse has promise, but is in need of pruning and a vigorous author-criticism. Her future seems to me very hopeful. Mr. Macleod has the most real daring; his poetry is most uncompromisingly experimental; his outlook is consistently forward. There is a sort of tortured ruggedness, as in volcanic rock structure, in his verse. With much writing and unsparing self-criticism he too will have a rich harvest of poetry. The volume has much experimental verse, considerable that is worthless, and very much more that is alive and interesting and full of promise. We should welcome more volumes like it.

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